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THE

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SUNDAY SCHOOL

QUARTERLY

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PREFACE.

To have witnessed and shared in the beginning and the completion of as many as Fifteen Volumes of this Magazine is a matter of thankfulness, though not unmingled with a feeling of responsibility.

Fifteen years of LIFE, LOVE, and LABOUR (to borrow the ideas of one of England's worthies), have passed away, each bearing its humble fruit in these pages, and, as we would fain hope, in the increased efficiency and power of many Sunday School Teachers.

Our aim has ever been to vindicate the true position of the Sunday School, to arouse on its behalf the generous and abiding sympathy of Christians seeking the extension of the Gospel they love, and to direct those efforts to the best means of attaining the desired result.

Conscious of many imperfections in this our work, we yet indulge the hope that our labours have not been in vain; and we now invite our readers to seek for us, as they doubtless do for themselves, wisdom and strength to attain that "patient continuance in well-doing" which issues, through God's own Sovereign mercy, in GLORY, HONOUR, and IMMORTALITY.

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Church of England

SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY

MAGAZINE.

1ST JANUARY, 1862.

The Teacher in his Closet.

A HANDFUL OF CORN FROM OLD FIELDS.

THE BIBLE.

We study and search the Scriptures: oh alas! but we first seek not, or crave for God's Holy Spirit; but read learning thereout, something to shew ourselves gospellers; or picking places everywhere to maintain argument.

Strype, Life of Archbishop Whitgift.

Some things in Scripture are hard, I deny not: it is very expedient that somewhat should be covered, to make us more diligent in reading, more desirous to understand, more fervent in prayer, more willing to ask the judgment of others, and to presume less on our own.

Bishop Jewel.

The general end both of the Old and New Testaments is one, the difference between them consisting in this, that the Old did make wise by teaching salvation through Christ that should come; the New by teaching that Christ the Saviour is come, and that that Jesus whom the Jews did crucify, and whom God raised up, is He.

Hooker.

We must attach ourselves to those things which are delivered in the Scriptures, but not seek into those which are not established in the word of God, because the Holy Spirit would have put them into the Scriptures, if it had been necessary for us to have known them; and we must not imagine ourselves wiser than the Holy Spirit. If certain things are not written, they must not even be mentioned, while on the other hand it is criminal to efface those which are written; for we are not masters but disciples.

Eusebius.

Every mind not infatuated by intellectual vanity must admit that it is only some few necessary points of knowledge relating to the constitution and movements of the spiritual and infinite world that can be made the matter of revelation to mankind, and these must be offered in detached portions, apart from their symmetry. Meanwhile the vast interior, the immeasurable whole, is not merely *concealed*, but is in itself strictly incomprehensible by human faculties.

Isaac Taylor.

Read the Bible!—read the Bible! Let no religious book take its place. Through all my distresses and perplexities I never read any other book, and never felt the want of any other. It has been my hourly study; and all my knowledge of the doctrines, and all my acquaintance with the experience and realities of religion, have been derived from the Bible only. I think religious people do not read the Bible enough. Books about religion may be useful, but they will *not* do instead of the simple truth of the Bible.

Wilberforce.

Mrs. Hannah More used to repeat from her friend, Mrs. Kennicott, a little anecdote of Dr. Kennicott, which strikingly proves how much the love of the sacred volume grows with its perusal. During the time that he was employed on his Polyglot Bible, it was her constant office in their daily airings, to read to him those

different portions to which his immediate attention was called. When preparing for their ride, the day after this great work was completed, upon her asking him what book she should now take, "Oh," he exclaimed, "let us begin the Bible."

The Bible is like a fair and spacious orchard, wherein all sorts of trees do grow, from which we may pluck divers kind of fruits; for in the Bible we have rich and precious comforts, learnings, admonitions, warnings, promises, and threatenings. There is not a tree in this orchard on which I have not knocked, and have shaken at least a couple of apples or pears from the same.

Luther.

Let no man think that the diligent reading of the Holy Scriptures will leave him with slight and imperfect knowledge. Such a study embraces the chief points of all human learning and science. In thoroughly knowing the Bible, he will know the most ancient and authentic history, the most sublime strains of poetry, the most just lessons of deep wisdom to guide his life, the most curious antiquities of nations, the most perfect book of devotion, the only infallible theology, the only origin and nature of the world in which he lives, and the only true information concerning that to which he is going; it will lay open to him the elements of oratory, and the purest specimens of eloquence, the secret springs of all human actions, and the chief events that shall hereafter take place up to the final judgment of all things. One justly said, "give me a candle and a Bible in a dark dungeon, and keep me there, and I will tell you all that the whole world is doing."

Bickersteth.

It is true that there be dark and deep passages in Scripture, for the exercise, yea for the humbling, yea for the amazing and astonishing of the sharpest sighted readers. But this argues much the pride and vanity of men's minds, when they busy themselves only in those, and throw aside altogether the most necessary, which are therefore the easiest and plainest truths in it. As in nature, the commodities that are of greatest necessity God hath made most common and easiest to be had, so in religion, plain instructions are given us to live by; and in the search of things that are more obscure, and less useful, men evidence that they had rather be learned than holy, and have still more mind to the tree of knowledge, than the tree of life. And in hearing of the word, are not they who are any whit more knowing than ordinary, still gaping after new notions, after something to add to the stock of their speculative knowledge, loathing this daily man-

na, these profitable exhortations, and "requiring meat for their lust?" But remember there is intemperance of the mind as well as of the mouth.

Again we have others complaining of the difficulty and darkness of the word of God and Divine truths; to say nothing of Rome's doctrine, who talk thus in order to excuse the sacrilege of stealing away the word from the people of God, (a senseless pretext, though it were true; because the word is dark in itself, should it therefore be made darker, by locking it up in an unknown tongue?) but we speak of the common vulgar excuse, which the gross ignorant profaneness of many seeks to shroud itself under, that they are not learned, and cannot reach the doctrine of the Scriptures. There be deep mysteries there indeed; but what say you to these things,—such rules as these? "Honour all men, Love the Brotherhood, Fear God, Honour the King?" Are such as these riddles, that you cannot know their meaning? Rather do not all understand them, and all neglect them? One well said, "the best way to understand the mysterious and high discourse in the beginning of St. Paul's Epistles is to begin at the practice of those rules and precepts that are in the latter end of them."

Leighton.

In the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament there is no distinction of verses. Robert Stephens is thought to have been the author, or inventor of verses in the New Testament in 1551, and of the whole Bible in 1555.

Michælis says that the Old Testament was divided into verses in the thirteenth century by Cardinal Hugo de Sancto Caro.

It appears that the Saxons had more than one translation of parts at least of the Bible among them. The first remarkable translation of the Bible was however by John Wiclif, who died in 1384. In 1526 William Tyndale printed the first edition of his New Testament. The first English Bible, or complete translation of the Scriptures *printed*, was that by Myles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter, in 1535. Archbishop Cranmer's Bible was printed in 1539, and Richard Taverner's in 1575; while the present Authorised Version was divided among 47 translators, and first printed in 1611.

Calmet.

There is such fulness in that Book that oftentimes it says much by saying nothing; and not only its expressions, but its silences are teaching, like the dial, in which the shadow as well as the light informs us.

Boyle. 1691.

The very night before the Lady Jane Grey suffered death, she addressed the following exhortation to her beloved sister, the Lady Catharine Grey, in a letter written at the end of her Greek Testament; "I have here sent you, good sister Catharine, a book which though it be not outwardly trimmed with gold, yet inwardly it is more worth than precious stones. It is the book, dear sister, of the law of the Lord; it is his Testament and last will, which He bequeathed to us poor wretches; which shall lead you to the path of eternal life."

"*Progresses of Queen Elizabeth.*"

How but from God could men unskilled in arts,
In different ages born, in different parts,
Weave such agreeing truths, or how, or why,
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie!
Unasked their pains, ungrateful their advice,
Starving their gain, and Martyrdom their price!

Dryden.

Cities fall, kingdoms come to nothing, empires fade away as the smoke. Where is Numa, Menos, Lycurgus? where are their books? what is become of their laws? But that this Book, no tyrants should have been able to consume, no tradition to cloke, no heretic maliciously to corrupt,—that it should stand unto this day, amid the wreck of all that is human, without the alteration of one sentence, so as to change the doctrine taught within, sure here is a very singular Providence claiming our attention in a most remarkable manner.

Jewel.

The Bible was not designed to clear up every difficulty. There are three lights, the light of nature, the light of grace, and the light of glory. The first cannot explain why a good man should suffer, and a bad man should flourish; but the light of grace solves the difficulty by teaching us that there is a future life, in which the wicked shall be punished, and the righteous rewarded. But the light of glory teaches us that the ways of God, which are incomprehensible at present, will at the last day appear most manifestly to be strictly just, and holy in the very highest degree.

Martin Luther.

THE PAST AND THE FUTURE.

THE close of an old year, and the dawn of a new one, is a sort of halting period in life,—a time when we are led to turn our thoughts backward on the past, and to let our imagination wander into the future. The retrospect may be valuable, and the anticipation of what may yet be ours not injurious, if both are conducted wisely; but the Divine precept, given us in the Psalmist's prayer, is, "*So* teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

We naturally look back upon the past: in one sense it is irrecoverable, but the memory of it remains, and may be both a warning and encouragement. We think of the employment of our time,—of the use of the means of doing good placed at our disposal,—of our sins and negligences, our weaknesses and our ignorances, our backsliding and rebellion against God's will,—and these things humble us, and lead us, let us hope, to pray for pardon for His sake, who alone can cleanse us from all our secret faults, and warn us to avoid the same errors and omissions in the future. And there is happiness, too, in the past which we delight to recall,—traces of harmless and real enjoyment,—peaceful hours of communion with God,—happy converse with dear friends,—plans of usefulness, and little purposes of good accomplished,—health preserved, and strength renewed,—and daily Providences of mercy, which have surrounded our path, and made our days pass pleasantly. May not these be laid up as arguments for future trustfulness to Divine direction, a reason why we should take no anxious thought for the morrow,—the uncertain future of our days on earth?

But, in some respects, it is not good for us to dwell upon the past,—but rather wise to follow the example of St. Paul, and to adopt his suggestion of "*forgetting* those things that are behind." For some are disposed to examine the past with so morbid and gloomy a spirit that it unnerves them for active present exertion. They would re-model their past lives if it were possible, avoiding (if they could go over again the by-gone years) the follies and mistakes by which they have been marred, and making different uses of the opportunities they have enjoyed: but because this is not now possible, giving up the attempt altogether. Or, when the elasticity of youth is past, with its restless desire for activity, its impulsive energy, its unwearied ardour (all of which are moderated as years roll on),—or when the bodily strength is weakened, and the mind loses its powers of long-sustained application;—if we look back, vainly regretting that now we have not similar powers to wield as we had formerly, then do we lose sight of that changed sphere of usefulness

which it may be God's purpose we should fill, and neglect the present means we possess of employing our talents in his service.

Or, perhaps, sorrow may have been our portion; trials that seemed heavier than we could bear may have come upon us. Dearly-loved objects, cherished tenderly in our hearts may have been removed; hopes, good and harmless, long fostered may have been blighted;—worldly misfortunes, resulting in no want of care, or no imprudence or extravagance of our own, may have been our lot;—or in our own bodies pain and weakness may have left their sad impress:—but if thus God has tried us, it was not intended that we should for ever afterwards walk in heaviness;—let us not double our trials past by revivifying them when they are dead and gone, by giving them a new existence in our thoughts, but rather let us forget these things, and bless God that they belong to the dead past. Nay, even sins which have humbled us, and have caused us bitterness of spirit, and tears of penitence, may be also so put away, lest they should hinder our future progress; for God Himself has said, "Thy sins and thine iniquities will I remember no more;" and if *He* can forget as well as forgive the sins of the penitent believer in Christ, why should he go mourning any longer for them?

Rather than thus dwell morbidly on recollections of time gone from us for ever,—of opportunities lost or not improved as they might have been,—of sorrows which have fulfilled their purpose,—let us forget those things that are behind, and stretch forward to those things which are before, even as the runner in the race would not linger to see how far he had gone, and how many impediments he had stumbled over in his way, but would press forward till he reached the goal where the prize awaited him. So let it be our ambition to win "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,"—that highest ambition which can be set before us; not despising or neglecting anything by which the present life can be rendered profitable,—the acquisition of knowledge, of a good report among our fellow men, of a competency, and of means to distribute for the good of others,—but ever setting before our hearts "the recompense of the reward" as our great end and purpose.

This will be the strongest incentive to future exertion. We shall feel, as the poet has sung, that

"Not enjoyment and not sorrow
Is our destined end or way;
But to act that each to-morrow,
Find us farther than to-day.

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant,
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act, act in the living Present,
Heart within and God o'erhead!"

And in a new year may we not strengthen the resolution that, in whatever future God allows us in time, it shall be our endeavour "to go on to perfection," trying to run the race set before us, and to overcome the difficulties of the way, that we may eventually be victors in the strife. Labour for Christ—in the Sunday school, or in any other way—devotion to Christ in the heart; battling with all that is unholy there, and trampling it down by the aid of his sanctifying Spirit,—these are purposes worthy of our best energies, and sure of a great reward. Other objects may be lawful in themselves, useful for this life, beneficial to our fellow men; this, while it gives the greatest happiness in the present, takes away from the future its uncertainty, and assures us of a real eternity, wherein the same work may be continued and completed with the increased energies which we shall then possess. Patient perseverance in well-doing,—a steady purpose of living for Christ, and a constant habit of fixing our eyes upon the prize of the high calling of God in Him—these make us superior to the changing influences of Time, which we can employ as means whereby to attain the great ends we have in view, even as the same poet we have already quoted, has said—

"We have not wings, we cannot soar:
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

"Nor deem the irrevocable Past
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If rising on its wrecks at last,
To something nobler we attain."

M. S.

INWARD PEACE.

A FEW days ago, while my thoughts were led to dwell more especially upon this subject, two death-bed scenes, which I shall never forget, recurred vividly to my mind. The sufferers were both women of humble station; the one I knew but little of, until the hand of God laid her on the sick-bed, from which she never rose; for, although my duties should have taken me often to her cottage, I used to avoid it, whenever I could frame the slightest excuse for so doing. The poor creature had, at some time during her life, undergone a severe illness, which left her so disfigured as to render

her countenance absolutely repulsive. Perhaps the impression she made on me was all the stronger from the fact of my never having seen her before this calamity occurred. One day, two or three years ago, on reaching her door, I nerved myself to enter, expecting, as usual, to encounter her glaring gaze; instead of her, however, the husband made his appearance, and, in a subdued tone of voice invited me to enter, adding that his poor wife was very ill. I expressed sympathy, and asked if I could in any way assist them: the man said she wanted for nothing, but would I walk up and see her. No choice being left me, I followed him in silence, though not without a certain amount of nervous fear, which was, however, dispelled the moment its object came in view, for illness had softened every feature. The mysterious messenger was at hand, but she knew he brought a message of peace, and her soul seemed tranquilly awaiting its summons. Her husband immediately left us, greatly moved. She appeared, at first, too weak to do more than sign a welcome, so we neither of us spoke for some minutes, and then I, advancing, took her cold hand, and whispered a few unmeaning words, scarcely conscious of what I said. She, too, began to speak, not in answer to me, but as though to give utterance to her thoughts. "Peace, peace, all is peace; not of myself, but Jesus gives it me; what should I do without my blessed Saviour?" He was, indeed, present, and I was dumb before Him. Words died on my lips, and I soon left her in silence, as I came, but no longer in terror. The following day I returned, and found her quite unconscious. The next morning I again attempted to see her, but the spirit had fled, and I wished not to look on the clay.

The other woman I knew very well; she had a pleasant face and cheerful manner, excepting when any trouble came upon her, for then she was always much cast down. About this time last year I returned home, after an absence of several weeks. On visiting her cottage, shortly after my arrival, I was encountered by a young girl, who begged me to go up directly, as her granny was dangerously ill, and had been fretting for me. I instantly obeyed, and found Mrs. —— in the last stage of a rapid decline. She was fearfully changed, and her usually mild eyes wandered restlessly about. She screamed out on seeing me "They say I'm dying, but that can't be true, for see how strong I am!" and she raised herself in bed for a moment, but fell back again directly. I quietly said, "Whether God calls you *now*, or years hence, you still must, at some time, leave this world. Are you afraid to die?"

"Afraid! no; why should I be? I've been a reg'lar church-goer, and I've done no bad sins; if I ever get about again, I will alter in

some respects. But I've been as good as any of my neighbours; no one can say a word agin' me."

Alas! hers was no real peace. I was much distressed for her, and tried to point out the only means of salvation, telling her that our own righteousness is but as filthy rags in the sight of God. She became at first extremely frightened, but a gleam of hope succeeded, as St. Paul's answer to the jailor at Philippi sounded in her ear. I spent a long time with her, and constantly repeated my visit, until an uncontrollable circumstance kept me away for several days; when I next went, she was dead. All I could learn from the little girl was, that her grandmother seemed "more reconciled to die at the last." The Searcher of hearts alone knows if she had found that peace which the world cannot give.

It was never intended we should have such vague notions on some subjects as many suppose. A few days ago, I heard a young boy express much regret on being told the cause of the rainbow. He had always looked upon it with awe, as a miracle, and was disappointed on hearing it explained as the natural result of the division of bright rays of light by the crystal drops of falling rain. In vain his father tried to fix his thoughts on God's covenant with Noah, of which it was intended constantly to remind us; the mystery was gone, and with it all interest. Perhaps this is the case with some among my readers; they like to consider that peace "which passeth all understanding" as a mysterious gift, its cause untraceable. I wish not for one moment to impute less purity to its hallowed nature, while I desire to picture it as a blessed reality. Those who possess this priceless treasure need not my pen to describe it, but others there are, like those of Laodicea, lukewarm Christians; to such among Sunday school teachers I now especially address myself.

It is true that a peculiar mystery *does* surround the children of God, an indescribable something, felt by all who come much in contact with them, and always distasteful to the children of this world, yet it is no mystery to themselves, but their source of joy. In whatever sphere they move, it is still the same; whatever duties they fulfil, it does not leave them. It is no treasure hid, but a light continually shining forth, which often, by disclosing the surrounding dark stains of sin, causes dismay and hatred; while it ever and anon, with the blessing of God, also directs by its rays some lost straggler back to the beaten path. It adorns, like a halo of glory, the life of each lowly follower of Jesus; not always visible, but always there; sometimes dimmed by pride, vanity, anger, and other sinful feelings, but never wholly obliterated, any more than the sun would be by black clouds passing over its disc; and why? Because

this pure, unsullied light is the gift of God, having no connection with earth; therefore, neither the world, the conflicts of the Christian's own naturally corrupt heart, nor even the powers of darkness are able to destroy it.

Yet, as certainly as the marvellous colours of the rainbow are effects produced by natural causes, so surely is this heavenly gift the result of two positive actions of our own minds (or rather of our own hearts), the first being an utter exclusion of self, followed by entire dependence on Christ. While we retain one single thought or desire to render ourselves worthy by acts of obedience, self-denial, almsgiving, &c., inward peace cannot be ours; such works are often proofs of faith and love, but they purchase ***nothing***. All I could say would not explain so well the true cause of inward peace as the poor dying woman's exclamation, "What should we do without a Saviour?"

Peace springs from faith in his all-sufficient sacrifice. He is our peace, having borne all the anguish, as well as the punishment, of our guilt. When He had fulfilled the mighty work of reconciliation, by his great atonement, He left behind a sure pledge of full pardon in bestowing peace, requiring nothing more of his followers than that they should cast aside every fear ("let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," was one of his last injunctions), and that they should rest their hopes on Him, according to the sweet assurance, "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

One more thought I would suggest; it is, that the presence of peace is synonymous with the presence of the Holy Spirit. The gentle dove, the symbol of peace, was the form in which He appeared descending on Jesus; and in that beautiful chapter, the 14th of St. John's Gospel, we find, almost linked together, the precious promise of the Comforter, and the sweet promise of peace.

One of the most striking instances of the effects of inward peace is given in the account of Paul and Silas, when they were imprisoned at Philippi; they had been scourged, thrust into a gloomy prison, their feet made fast in the stocks, not as in this country, but tied by cords to a beam of wood, in such a way as to cause their lacerated backs to be extended on the cold stone floor; yet, with all this to depress them, in addition to the probability of approaching death, the light of peace within shone forth, while they lifted their voices in prayer, and sang praises to God, not feebly, but with such joy and gladness that the other prisoners heard them.

Sunday school teachers, you call yourselves followers of Christ, and are labourers in his vineyard, but do you wear his badge in your hearts—have you inward peace? If not, your labours are in

vain, as far as yourselves are concerned; you are but sign-posts, lifeless machines. May such among you as have hitherto been indifferent on this vital point, be now stirred up to wrestle mightily with God, until you have obtained peace, aye, and joy, for they go hand in hand. Do not wait for a death-bed or affliction to settle this question; take *now* what is so freely, so lovingly offered, lest it be for ever withheld, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding (only because the mind of man is unable to grasp the vastness of the gift), shall make your hearts, at all times, to sing with unfettered joy.

Hana.

LONGINGS.

When shall I be at rest? my trembling heart
Grows weary of its burden, sickening still
With hope deferred. Oh! that it were Thy will
To loose my bonds, and take me where Thou art!

When shall I be at rest? My eyes grow dim
With straining thro' the gloom,—I scarce can see
The waymarks that my Saviour left for me;
Would it were morn, and I were safe with Him.

When shall I be at rest? Hand over hand
I grasp, and climb an ever steeper hill,
A rougher path. Oh! that it were Thy will,
My tired feet might tread the Promised Land.

Oh that I were at rest! a thousand fears
Come thronging o'er me lest I fail at last.
Would I were safe, all toil and danger past,
And thine own hand might wipe away my tears.

Oh that I were at rest, like some I love,
Whose last fond looks drew half my life away,
Seeming to plead that either they might stay
With me on earth, or I with them above.

But why these murmurs? Thou didst never shrink
From any toil or weariness for me,
Not even from that last deep agony;
Shall I beneath my little trials sink?

No Lord, for when I am indeed at rest,
One taste of that deep bliss will quite efface
The sternest memories of my earthly race,
Save but to swell the sense of being blest.

Then lay on me whatever cross I need
To bring me there. I know Thou canst not be
Unkind, unfaithful, or untrue to me!
Shall I not toil for Thee, when Thou for me didst bleed?

J. G. F.

SATISFIED.

"*Why are Sunday School teachers satisfied with so low a standard of personal piety?*" Such was the subject recently proposed for discussion at a meeting of teachers. Alas! that there should ever have arisen occasion for the question to be asked; that ever any other spirit should be seen in those who undertake this work than that of the Apostle, "not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after;" "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, I press toward the mark." Is it not our privilege to walk in the light, to grow in grace, to be conformed to the image of God's Son, and shall we be *satisfied* with less than this? Surely not; many, many there are who hourly bewail their want of closer conformity to Christ, who yet lie not idly upon their faces, but stir up themselves to take hold on God, and daily say,

"Nearer my God to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!
Even though it be a cross
That raiseth me.
Still all my cry shall be,
Nearer my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!"

But is this the case with Sunday-school teachers as a body? Are they evidently aiming high, or is it not painfully true that they are too easily satisfied with their position, and that that position is a low one? Where is the increasing faith, the warmer zeal, the deepening love, the growing devotedness; where the greater deadness to the world, and the clearer and more manifest writing as the "epistles of Christ," which would and must be the effect of a constant endeavour to reach the lofty standard of perfection,—a stan-

dard never to be lowered because of our weakness; nothing less than complete identity of will, word, and deed, with the likeness of Christ, nothing short of walking in all things, "even as He walked." Oh! which of us, as we turn our eyes to this "*mark*" set before us, must not fall low at his feet, exclaiming, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified?" But if we feel that faint and feeble are our steps in the path of personal piety, that our attainments therein are low, and that we rest too easily in them, let us enquire, "What is the cause?" Why are we lying in the dust, when we might be soaring upwards, dwelling in "high and heavenly places?" Perhaps one reason may be found in a want of enlarged acquaintance with the Divine rule. We measure ourselves among ourselves, and compare ourselves with those around us, in which we surely are "not wise," and which, as much as anything, stunts the believer's growth in grace. But if we had a large view of the exceeding breadth of God's holy law; if, while rejoicing in our freedom from it as a work to be done for salvation, we bound it to our hearts as a transcript of the character of God to which we are predestined to be conformed, then, while free from the law as a covenant, we should guide our daily life by it as a rule, and in its pure brightness should learn so much of our own exceeding sinfulness, that there would be no room ever to be *satisfied*.

Again, there is great danger from the world; not only from its vain amusements, but, perhaps, even more from its spirit, the *relish* for pleasures, and company, and pursuits, which, it may be, have been abandoned from a sense of duty. Where this taste is still felt, there will be no high advances in holiness, and those in whom it abides unmortified, will too certainly be satisfied with a low standard of personal piety.

Closely connected with this is a slight sense of obligation. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Let but a Christian believe with a realizing power that "Christ died for his sins, to deliver him from this present evil world;" that He does not strike at the root of his earthly pleasure, without providing a far more glorious joy; that life eternal, with all that it includes of pardon, holiness, peace, is a *present* blessing, and not a prospect far away; let all this be understood, believed, acted on, and while the weary heart will rest in Christ, as made unto it "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," it will never rest from striving after holiness, till, in its full perfection in glory, the Redeemer shall, in the highest sense, "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied;" and the freed spirit shall be glad for ever in the aforetime often longed-for joy, "When I awake up after they likeness, *I shall be satisfied*."

Oh, dear friends, let us each ask our own hearts, Am I satisfied with a low standard of personal piety? or am I acting as if I were? How much we lose for ourselves by want of higher spiritual life! What depths there are in God's Word! what heights in Christ's love that would be unfolded to us if we lived nearer to him! How much our friends lose by us for the same reason! How seldom we refresh their spirits, how rarely help them heavenward, because we are content ourselves to live so far from the source of all comfort and wisdom! And who shall say how much our classes lose through the deficiency of their teachers in faith, in prayer, in love, in holiness. Gifts for teaching, for illustration, for discipline, are all valuable, but far above them all,—ah, the height of heaven above the earth,—is the power of deep, elevated, personal piety. Would we be happy, holy, useful, then must we set our standard high, and be ever pressing onward, upward, forward towards it, thankful for every point attained, but never, *never satisfied.*

For oh, how much must be destroyed,
How much renewed must be,
Ere we can fully stand complete,
In likeness, Lord, to Thee!

When the flesh sinks, then strengthen Thou
The spirit from above;
Make us to feel Thy service sweet,
And light Thy yoke of love.

So shall we faultless stand at last
Before Thy Father's throne;
The blessedness for ever ours,
The glory all Thine own!"

Bora.

THE HAPPY SECURITY OF CHRIST'S OWN.

How comforting to the believer in Christ is the review of his security as one of the flock of which the Lord Jesus is the "Good Shepherd."

Christ's flock are his own, by a fourfold title.

1. They are his by the gift of the Father. "My Father, who *gave them* to me, is greater than I; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Given in the immutable counsels of eternity, they who *are* Christ's are his for ever. To them Jesus

addresses the words, "Fear not, little flock, for it is *your* Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

2. They are Christ's by purchase. "I lay down my life for the sheep." How much *that* is valued for which a high price is paid; how carefully it is guarded and kept from injury. How careful, then will the Lord be of that flock which has not been redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver or gold, but with his own precious blood. He *will* preserve them; and his *ability* to do this is commensurate with his will, for it is He who says, "All power is given unto Me, in heaven and in earth."

3. Christ's flock are his by the conquest of his arm; He alone fought that terrible conflict with sin and Satan, which frees his people from everlasting bondage of condemnation. He hath "led captivity captive, and received gifts for men." His people can now say,

"Death and hell are vanquished foes."

4. Christ's people are His by their own surrender to be the willing subjects of his grace. There are none among Christ's flock who are there against their will. They are made willing in the day of his power. They can find, in their experience, if not the precise moment, hour, day, or month, or year, yet some period when they were led to make free surrender of themselves to the Lord Jesus,—to be *saved* by Him, and to be *ruled* by Him; and the grace enabling them to do this is evidence to them, that as they are Christ's by the fourth title, so they are his by the former three. And not until *sensible* of the last condition, do they *enjoy realisation* of security in the first.

C. L. C.

MORNING PRAYER.

Lord take possession of my heart,
Reign only sovereign there,
And bid each passion hence depart,
That would Thine empire share.
With Thee, my waking eyes unclose
At dewy dawn of day;
On Thee, all hopes and fears repose,
Sure, safe, and stedfast Stay.

To Thee my inmost thoughts ascend,
While resting still I lie;
And when the suppliant knee I bend
To Thee I turn mine eye.
I would not think a single thought
That contradicts Thy will,
Nor speak one word with folly fraught,
Or do one deed of ill.

May each affection of my will,
Each faint or warm desire,
Led by Thy Holy Spirit still,
To Thee alone aspire.
But oh! I know this cannot be,
Unless Thine aid Thou give,
The rebel pow'r of sin in me
To slay, while grace shall live.

Let ev'ry purpose, wish, and will,
To meek submission bent,
Thy Holy service, work, fulfil,
With strength which Thou hast sent.
Oh then, whate'er of sorrow fall,
I'll trust in Thee, my God,—
Believing good shall spring from all,
I'll kiss the chast'ning rod.

E. L. T.

The Teacher in his Study.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

I.

Those who bring a child to Baptism in the Church of England, are exhorted in these words:—"Chiefly ye shall provide that he may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, in the vulgar tongue, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health; and that this child may be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life." First, to learn to believe the foundation truths of the Christian faith; then to know how to pray, and afterwards, in the strength thus obtained, to go and do the will of God, seems to be the order in which the Christian life is to be matured; and in the Church Catechism, the same order is also observed. Following the guidance of that in-

valuable text-book for the Sunday school teacher, we now proceed to direct his attention to that part of it which contains the Ten Commandments, having in some articles which appeared in the two preceding volumes, considered the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed.

In the answer to the question as to "how many Commandments there are?" the child is instructed to quote the twentieth chapter of Exodus, in which it is declared that the Lord gave them unto the Israelites, "saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." It might thus appear that the laws so given to the Jews, were only binding upon them, and were not obligatory upon us as Christians, seeing that the Jewish law is, as far as we are concerned, done away, (2 Cor. iii. 7—11; Gal. iii. 24; Heb. vii. 12). It may be well for us then to remember, and also to explain to our scholars, (so far as they may be able to understand it,) that the two tables of the Law, given at Sinai by God to Moses, only contained the principles of the primitive law of nature, which never can be annulled, although the terms of life and death were not under the Law, and are not under the Gospel, the same as they were under the law of innocency. The written commandments given to the Jews by Moses, were God's own transcript of His laws of Nature, written for their guidance, as belonging and applying to the nature of all men; and when Christ came into the world as the Divine Redeemer of mankind, he adopted it as the law of his kingdom, repeated and owned every part of it in his own teaching, and commanded it to his own disciples; and has contracted the whole of it into the great principle of Love, (Rom. ii. 14; iii. 19, 20; Matt. v. 18, 19; Mark x. 19; Matt. xxii. 36—40). Love is a stronger and higher motive than that of obedience, and the willing service of the heart to God, is more acceptable to Him than the avoidance of offending Him in the spirit of fear. And in regard to our fellow men, the love of our neighbour, and affection for those who are set over us, will more readily command obedience and restrain us from injuring them, than fear of punishment. The *Ceremonial Law* of the Jews, must never be confounded with the great *Moral Law* summed up in the Ten Commandments, for the one is annulled, being only the shadow of good things to come, while the other is the eternal law of holiness.

There are certain general principles also, which should be borne in mind, both in studying and in teaching these Divine Commandments; for instance, when a particular duty is commanded, the contrary of it is thereby forbidden; and when a general prohibition is given against any sin, all the particular kinds of sin to be included under that general description, are necessarily condemned also, and

in the same manner, every duty of the kind commanded under the general term, is also included. There can be no reservations as to these commands and prohibitions,—they apply to all of us, and to all the faculties and powers of our nature, body, soul, and spirit; and while certain duties cannot be actively called into exercise at all times, the prohibitions against sin, are applicable under whatever circumstances we may be placed. Let it also be remembered, that God, who knows all that is in us, has made these laws, and therefore has not commanded any thing which is a natural impossibility; and that we have the means by which to control our evil inclinations, and to bring them under the influences of that Divine grace and purifying influence of the Holy Spirit, by which we may be disposed to obey God's laws. Every commandment kept carries a blessing with it, as every violation of it involves a punishment, differing according to the offence, sometimes inflicted in this life, certainly in that which is to come, unless by true repentance the converted believer in Jesus is enabled by faith to apply to his soul the merits of Christ's perfect sacrifice, and to remove the Divine anger at his sin, and thus to be restored to his Father's favour by the powerful intercession of his dearly beloved Son. But while under the covenant of the Gospel, we are comforted by knowing that sin is not unpardonable, yet let us ever be on our guard against the deceitfulness of sin, remembering that it is not the completed act of transgression alone which is an offence to God, but also the thought concerning it, the desire suggesting it, the rebellion of the heart rising against God's law, although not daring openly to transgress it. And on the other hand, although we shall discover by daily experience, that we have no natural inclination towards that which is good, yet if we use the means placed at our disposal, every effort towards the good end of fulfilling the Divine law will be blessed and strengthened, so as to help us to keep the holy and just commands of our God.

The *Introduction* to the Decalogue, may serve to shew us the principle upon which all people are thus called upon to render obedience to it. "I am the Lord thy God," declares first the sovereignty of the Creator, and next the subjection of man to His will; and the added statement, "who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage," sets forth the further claim to obedience arising out of the relationship of man towards God as his Redeemer. Egyptian bondage to the Jew, typified the bondage of Satan to the Christian; and we are enjoined to obedience by the added obligation, of gratitude to Christ as our Redeemer from sin and death, to whom therefore, in gratitude for all we have and hope for, we owe all love and all obedience.

The law was given to Moses on two tables of stone, written with the finger of God; these have been divided into two parts, the first containing four commandments—those which relate to our belief in, our worship of, and obedience to God—the second containing the last six commandments, teaching us the great laws of humanity, whereby we may live peaceably and kindly together, fulfilling our duty to our neighbours as our fellow creatures. This division has no Scriptural authority, but is that which the subjects of them naturally suggest. It is that which was adopted by the Hebrews in the time of Josephus, and by the early fathers of the Christian Church, Ambrose and Origen. But at a later period, another division was introduced, and that as early as the time of Augustine, when the first and second commandments, as we render them, were joined together, and the tenth divided into two. Thus the first table would contain three, and the second seven commandments. This practice is followed in the Lutheran Church, and in that of Rome; our own is the most ancient and the most natural; but this point in no way affects the great controversy between the Protestants and Romanists as to image-worship, for it is not the *place* in the Decalogue which the second commandment occupies, which is of so much importance, whether as a part of the first or as a separate law, but the serious fact that, in the shorter catechism of the Romish Church, an abridgment of these commandments is often made for the unlearned, in which the second command is *omitted altogether*, and that in the most elaborate disquisitions for her learned members on the distinction between the veneration and adoration of images, she ignores altogether the existence of a positive Divine prohibition against *all* forms of worship from the *lowest* to the highest, when it says, "Thou shalt not *bow down* to them nor worship them."

Let us now proceed to look at these Divine laws as they are arranged in our Church Catechism. The *First Commandment* consists but of the single solemn charge, "Thou shalt have none other gods but me." The duty we owe to God is implied in the prohibition, that we are to render it to no other. And this duty is, that we should know, believe, confess, and reverence Him as our God; that in our wills and affections, we should cleave to and love Him only as such; and in our lives practically obey and serve Him in that relationship. The instance of the Jews, who, during the absence of Moses from among them to receive these laws, adopted the worship of the Egyptians, from whose cruel slavery they had so recently been delivered by the Divine interposition miraculously displayed in their behalf, shows us that no people, however favoured, are safe from the possibility of choosing other gods; and though indeed in our civilized age and country, it may seem impossible that we should fall

into the gross idolatries which still debase a large portion of mankind among the heathen, yet have we cause to fear and tremble for ourselves and others, for disobedience to, and sometimes utter neglect of this primal law of odedience to our Creator; for we make to ourselves strange gods, when we seek from others that good which He alone can bestow. "The strange god," as an old divine, Henry Bullinger, has defined it, "is whatsoever we do make to ourselves to be our god beside the very living and eternal God, wherein we trust, wherein we hope, whereon we call, which we do love and fear, wheron we settle and fasten our minds, whereupon we do depend, whereof we make account as of our treasure, help, and safeguard, both in prosperity and in our adversity." That God requires us to believe and to act so as to prove that we have no other God beside him, is shown in many parts of Scripture, (see Deut. iv. 35; vi. 3—5; Isa. xliii. 10—14; 1 Cor. viii. 4—6). And our duty is to believe, to love and to fear Him; to do Him honour and service as God, and neither to render that love, reverence, or obedience, to any other. It is easy for us to discover the ways in which this first commandment may be, and alas! is broken by us. For if it be true that that object is a God to us, which usurps the supreme place in our hearts, claims more of our thoughts, engrosses more of our hopes, and acts more upon our fears than does the Lord Jehovah—then those who are chiefly mindful of earthly things (Phil. iii. 19); who are covetous, (Col. iii. 5); who value as their chief good their money, the world's pleasures or opinions, the elevation of self, in its indulgence, or in the esteem of others; those who have not God in all their thoughts, who do not acknowledge Him in all their ways, and whose aim in all things is not his service and glory—are as guilty of the sin of idolatry, in thus worshipping "gods many and lords many," as those who with less of knowledge and advantages, are still the followers of dumb idols. Let us then be watchful (1 Cor. x. 12) against a violation of this commandment, even while confessing with our lips that God is our Lord; for there is an idolatry of the heart which no law can reach, an infidelity of the spirit that no professed opinion can check, against which we can only strive and pray; and thus when listening to this first divine commandment, ought we to use from our hearts the confession as well as the petition provided for us in the Liturgy—"Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep *this* law."

The *Second* Commandment, although intimately connected with the preceding, is different from it—for while the one forbids the acknowledgment of false gods universally, the other condemns the worship of idols in particular, and thus prohibits not only the setting up of any image, picture, or symbol, as a representation of the Deity, but

also the erection of anything as a visible emblem of his invisible Self. Idolatry we know existed, if not before the flood, as least very soon after it (see Josh. xxiv. 2); and was widely extended throughout the world at the time when the Israelites became a nation. How the debasing influence of it even affected the chosen people, all Scripture shows, and also how greatly such sin especially displeased God. Yet it is evident that they could not have supposed at first, that the image before which they bowed and offered sacrifice, was actually the God who had done so many wonders for them, but only an emblem to put them in mind of Him, something that might appear to the senses, as a representation of Him "whom no man can see," (1 Tim. vi. 16). In the latter part of their history, the Jews fell into a deeper degradation, but after the Babylonian captivity, they seem to have become convinced of the Divine indignation against the sin of idolatry in all its forms and degrees, and to have held it in abhorrence unto this day. Unhappily, the Christian Church has not always partaken of this spirit. After some five centuries had elapsed, images began to find a place in places of worship, probably at first to preserve the remembrance and do honour to the memory of departed saints, or perhaps to meet the prejudices of the heathen, to induce them to embrace the Gospel. To such an extent was this carried, that both by Jews and Mahometans, Christians were accused of idolatry. After centuries of controversy, many of the Churches adandoned it, but the Church of Rome, in its creed of Pope Pius IV., still maintains, "that the images of Christ and of the ever-virgin mother of God, as also of the other saints, are to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration are to be shown to them." "Not," as the Council of Trent explained, "that there is in them any divinity or virtue, on the score of which they are to be worshipped, but because the honour which is paid to them is referred to the prototypes which they represent, so that through the medium of the image which we embrace, and before which we uncover the head and bow, we may adore Christ."

It is a deep cause of lamentation to every one who takes God's word and commandment for his guide, to find any professing Christian community, thus attempting to gloss over a direct violation of the letter and spirit of the Divine Law; for in this second commandment, every kind of graven image is forbidden to be employed for any such purpose. "Thou shalt *not* bow down to it, nor worship it," is the Divine command, even though it be intended as a representation of God Himself; for He is a Spirit, immeasurable, incomprehensible, unspeakable, filling heaven and earth: how then can He be represented in any likeness or substance? Still less will God suffer such reverence or worship "through the medium of the image,"

to any other than Himself. "I am a jealous God." He will not allow a rival to be set up by his creatures; He will not be trifled with, nor tempted; nor will He permit us to render our worship to Him according to our own choice, but only according to his declared will (see Deut. vii. 25; Isa. xl. 18—25; xlii 17; xliv. 9—20; xlvi. 5—9). Thus are we prohibited from rendering outward homage to any representation of the Deity, of the Saviour in his earthly nature, or of any creature of God, however we may desire to hold them in reverence. Therefore, while pictures and images of Christ as man, or of sacred scenes, or of saints, may be made for the purpose of suggesting good and holy thoughts, they must not be used in any degree of worship, for God is a Spirit, and has forbidden us to take of his glory and to give it to another, but requires us to reverence Him in holiness and singleness of heart, according to his perfect nature, and the teachings of his Word and the Holy Spirit. The denunciation with which the commandment is closed, shows the natural effect of the parents' idolatry upon their children, and Scriptural and profane history alike illustrate it, by showing that this sin has led generation after generation to imitate their parents' sins, and so to incur the Divine anger. "But there is mercy with Thee; therefore shalt Thou be feared;" for bounds are set to the execution of God's justice, that sinners may be encouraged to repent; and the promise of saving mercy to all who will receive it, and of blessing to children for the sake of their godly ancestors, proves that God's love and goodness exceed his anger, and that He is ever ready to turn away his wrath, and to show loving kindness to those who turn to Him in faith, love, and obedience (Ps. ciii.)

W. S.

COMPARISON.

Our minds are, according to the will of the Most High, so constituted that not an idea can arise without emanating from something else. Nothing is created in the brain; for, although superior intellects may produce very great results from but small original matter, the material must be there to begin with, as none but God can create. For instance, the first notion of gravity was generated in Sir Isaac Newton's mind by observing an apple fall from a tree; this gave rise to a long train of ideas, which he carried out in experiments, ending in the discovery of the true law of gravity, which was not only the cause of numberless discoveries on our own globe, but also the foundation of almost every theory relating to the motions of the heavenly bodies.

The question is, how can a primary idea gain access to the mind? in other words, how does the understanding first become imbued with the knowledge of actualities? Through the medium of our senses; and the work of these all-powerful conductors is regulated by means of *comparison*, without which aid, guided by reason, we could have no proper conception of anything; for instance, we only know if a house be large or small by comparing it with others.

This, then, being the case with what is apparent, in order that we may form correct ideas of what is unknown to our bodily senses, God (who has, in his wisdom, seen fit to draw so distinct a line between things temporal and things spiritual), in his goodness, has ordained that a faint shadow of what would otherwise be utterly beyond our comprehension, should be revealed to our understandings by the same medium of comparison. He knows that heavenly joys, and the Divine attributes, Love, Mercy, Justice, &c., would be enveloped in deepest mystery, did He not make earthly things their types or pictures. The Bible is, therefore, full of comparisons or similes; it is unnecessary to refer to more than the 103rd Psalm to illustrate this fact; in the 11th and 12th verses we read, "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." And in the 13th, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." It is also remarkable that much of Christ's teaching was delivered in parables, of which many begin with these words, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto," thereby elucidating what was previously vague by comparing it to things evident to the senses.

With this example before us of the means used by the Master Teacher to instil divine truths into the minds of his disciples, as well as the positive conviction which meditation on the subject must produce, we cannot hesitate in considering that the most successful way of imparting instruction to our Sunday scholars must also be to bring vividly before their mind's eye pictures of the facts we relate, by comparing to them such circumstances as are within their own experience.

Human beings, especially the least enlightened, are very imaginative, that is, they are very prone to form images or pictures of what they hear; and these generally carry their ideas far from the truth, and are afterwards very difficult to efface. Of this we have sufficient evidence in tracing back the history of the religion of any heathen nation. All began, originally, with a knowledge of the existence of the One Supreme Being, who revealed Himself to them by his works, as good, wise, mighty, and full of love (see Acts xiv. 17); but they forsook Him, and refused to be taught by his servants,

Noah, Abraham, Lot, &c.; therefore, being left to follow their own devices, they began to substitute the many pictures they had formed in their ideas of God for the Great Jehovah Himself. They ignorantly severed grace from grace, and of each built up in their minds a separate god, gave names to these false deities, and carved, according to their notions, likenesses of all, in wood or stone. Nor did their presumption and folly end here; the Evil one, and all the bad passions of mankind, were personified in the same way, and worshipped by them. Imagination has, in different nations, taken various flights, leading some to worship sun, moon, and stars; others, the elements; while others pictured to their minds that the Great Unknown dwelt in the forms of animals, and therefore they reverenced and feared them.

I might point out how the play of misdirected imagination in our own country, as well as in France and Germany, gave rise to belief in ghosts, witches, and other superstitions, but to pursue this theme would occupy too much space, and enough has been said to show how impossible it is to isolate ideas. Thoughts *will* intertwine and become associated with familiar circumstances, and Satan is always watchful to seize any means for instilling error; so that unless we improve the opportunity now granted us to work on the easy machinery of a child's mind (except the Lord, in his mercy, use other workers to supply our deficiency), the machinery will work all wrong.

Not every one has the natural gift of setting forth truths in such a way that the hearers may realise what is said. The writer had once to contend with much difficulty, but it was in a great measure overcome by prayerful efforts to realise first herself the facts contained in the lesson, before attempting to expound it to the young ones. It stands to reason that whatever is brought vividly before our mind's eye must be easier to describe than what we have but a faint conception of. It may be urged that our best teaching is in vain, since God only can give a right understanding of all things; I admit that He alone has power to reach the heart, but that his word may have access to the understanding by human means is certain, although, alas! the knowledge is sometimes fruitless; for we read, in James ii. 19, that even *devils* believe. Saul, king of Israel, *knew* what was right, and did it not. Pharoah, in the face of constant fearful evidences of God's power, hardened his heart. Judas, the witness with others of Christ's miracles, betrayed his Lord; and thousands in this favoured land die in their sins, with a perfect knowledge of the way of salvation in their minds, but without the love of God in their hearts. Notwithstanding these sad facts, we must still earnestly strive to teach the understandings

of our children, with the firm conviction that He who has bidden us work for Him will so bless our labours, that much of the seed we thus carefully sow in faith will sink through the understanding, to take deep root in the heart, and thence, in due time, spring up to bear abundant fruit to His honour and glory.

Therefore, dear fellow-teachers, let us study to adopt this simple mode of teaching; and, taking Jesus for our pattern, endeavour to set forth the wonders of his grace, in language not, as it were, dead, but living; bringing what took place hundreds of years ago with such freshness of reality before the children, that they may be constrained, Sabbath after Sabbath, on quitting their classes, to imitate Mary of old, who kept the things she had heard, and "pondered them in her heart."

Rana.

SOLOMON.

The heights and depths of Solomon's life cannot but be subjects of wonder to the student of Bible biography, and of warning to all who read God's Word, that it may prove a light to their feet, and a lamp to their path. Notwithstanding the great favours showered upon this "beloved of the Lord," and the great stores of wisdom which flowed from his lips, we find he was weak and erring as we are, that he was not only liable to the same temptations, but that he actually yielded to them, and sought pleasure, not altogether in contemplating the wisdom and beneficence of God, and in the marvels of the works of his hands, and the wonders of his law, but also in following the promptings of the evil one, and in fulfilling the desires of his own wayward mind. But earthly wisdom could no more keep man in the law of Moses, and make the Jew acceptable to God, than it can now keep him in the more excellent law of the Gospel, and make him acceptable to Christ. The heart, then, as now, needed the guidance of God's Holy Spirit; and when that Spirit was withdrawn, even Solomon, with all his wisdom and all his glory, was little better than many of those kings who followed him, of whom the sad story so often is, that they "did evil in the sight of the Lord."

Let us, then, consider this life so high in its privileges, so low in its fall, and see what lessons we may find; whether they be good, that we may follow them with advantage; or evil, that we may avoid them. Solomon's life naturally divides itself into two parts; the first includes his piety and (as a consequence) his prosperity; the

second part will contain a brief account of those events of his life which occurred after he had been seduced from the God of his father David.

Before the birth of Solomon, it had come into David's heart to build a house unto the Lord. The ark of God had been brought to Zion with much rejoicing, and placed in the tabernacle that David had pitched for it, and burnt-offerings and peace-offerings had been offered before the Lord. King David could then sit in his own house in peace, for he had rest from all his enemies round about him. And as he pondered upon these things, and thought of all the way by which he had been led, and the great mercies that had been vouchsafed unto him, his heart yearned to do something by which his gratitude might be evident to all who lived in his day, or who should come after him. "See now," he said, "I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth in curtains." Was it meet that man's house should be more glorious than God's; that when the tribes went up to worship on Mount Zion they should see a far more gorgeous palace for the king than that in which the glory of God was revealed? No, David was not one who thought more of himself and of his own pleasures than of Him by whom he reigned. His was no barren, meaningless, costless worship; his motto ever was, "I will not offer unto the Lord my God of that which costs me nothing." In order to carry out his intentions, David, as was usual wish him, sent for Nathan, and made known to him the desire of his heart. Nathan at once gave his approval, and, on his own responsibility, bade him go do all that was in his heart. But a greater than Nathan willed otherwise; that same night, the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, "Go and tell my servant David, shalt thou build me a house? . . . When thy days be full, and thou shalt sleep with my fathers, I will set up my seed after thee. . . . He shall build a house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men; but my mercy shall not depart away from him." Such were the exceeding great and precious promises which ushered David's son and successor into the world. At his birth, the Lord sent by Nathan, and called him Jedediah, "*Beloved of the Lord.*"

As in so many other instances of Old Testament worthies, we know nothing of the childhood and youth of Solomon. How much do we often regret this, and how is our interest in and love for a Joseph and a Samuel increased by the few but precious glimpses we have of their early years. And what a blank would be left in the Saviour's earthly career, had not that record of his journey to Jerusalem, when he was twelve years old, been preserved. One

Gospel fact like this outweighs all the spurious gospels and monkish legends the world has ever produced, and throws a glory round his career which never fades from the human mind, from the time when the simple narrative is related by the loving mother or Sunday teacher to the day when the hoary head is pillowed in death. Children have such a sympathy with the *children of the Bible*, that they never weary of hearing of Joseph's sorrows, Samuel's pious service in the temple, the young Child's flight into Egypt, and of Timothy's knowledge of the Scriptures. They seem to realise every incident, to associate themselves with those youthful saints, and to love them so dearly, that they will (as one did a few days back) weep bitter tears "because Samuel is dead." These and like reflections raise in us some feelings of regret that the first eighteen years of Solomon's life are passed over without remark. But it may not be amiss for us to glance rapidly at the condition and result of Judæa during that time.

At Solomon's birth there were still hanging over David the unfulfilled threatenings which followed on the murder of Uriah. In the year following, we read of Amnon's unhappy love for Tamar; and two years later, the murder of Amnon by Absalom is recorded, together with Absalom's flight from Jerusalem to Geshur, where he remained three years, when, by the parable of the woman of Tekoah, David was induced to bid him return to Jerusalem, but not to his father's house. During two years, he saw not his father's face, and when they met, through the mediation of Joab, the peace was of short duration. Pride and beauty were the causes of Absalom's downfall. He prepared horses and chariots, and fifty men to run before him; and, by fair speeches and kind actions, he stole away the hearts of the people from the king, and caused himself to be proclaimed king in Hebron, whither he fled. Two hundred men, who "knew not anything," "went in their simplicity" from Jerusalem to join him. The king's counsellor, Ahithophel, also fled at Absalom's bidding, and the conspiracy increased daily. But Absalom's prosperity was short. Ahithophel's counsels were overthrown by the wary Hushai; the battle went against him, and he, as we so well know, was slain. No sooner was Absalom dead, than all parties became zealous to bring the king back. Sheba's rebellion was quickly suppressed, and his head thrown over the walls of Abel of Beth-maachah to Joab and Abishai below. Famine followed close on the war, of which, in many cases, it is only the natural result. But in this case the famine was sent to avenge the murder of the Gibeonites. War again followed on famine. The Philistines, those inveterate enemies of the Jews, again provoked David to go down and fight against them, where,

had it not been for Abishai, David's life would have been lost, and "the light of Israel quenched." Once more trouble came upon the land. In an evil moment David was tempted to number his people, and the punishment was a pestilence, which destroyed seventy thousand men.

Thus we see that Solomon was nursed in a nation which was suffering continually from the sword, the famine, or the pestilence, those "sore judgments" so often used to punish a nation for its sins. How did he acquit himself during these years of trouble and sorrow? He was not of age sufficient to be David's counsellor, but might, by his wisdom and goodness, have been the comfort and solace of his father's heart.

David had another son, Adonijah by name, who was much beloved of his father. He was next in age to Absalom, and, like him, was a goodly person to look upon; and, like Absalom, also, he had designs upon the crown of Israel. Joab, the warrior, and Abiathar, the priest, supported his claims. Sheep, and oxen, and fat cattle were slain at En-rogel, and Adonijah's brethren and the men of Judah were invited to the feast; all, except Solomon, Nathan, Benaiah, and the mighty men, were called together. But while the rebels were feasting, Nathan was acting. No sooner had he learned the existence of the dangerous meeting at En-rogel, than he determined to counteract their treason. David was now very old, and, it may be, his energy failed him at this critical period, so that, had not Nathan moved in the matter, Adonijah might have reigned instead of Solomon. And, again, Nathan knew his power over the king was great, and he determined to use every effort to place Solomon on the throne of his father. Bathsheba was sent into the king's presence, and while she was pleading the cause of her son, Nathan himself came in, and joined her in the petition. The king renewed his promises that Solomon should reign after him, and caused him to be at once proclaimed as king in Jerusalem, and anointed. Adonijah spent his brief space of power not so much in consolidating his kingdom, as in eating and drinking, feasting his followers, and making merry. It was while at one of these feasts, that he heard the blast of the trumpet which proclaimed Solomon king, and announced his own overthrow. Jonathan, the priest's son, came to the feast, and was welcomed by Adonijah as a bringer of good tidings; but no sooner had he told all that was done in the city, than every man's heart failed him, and the guests rose from the table, and every man went his way, leaving the rebel Adonijah alone in his trouble, without one to comfort him or to fight for him. He saw the danger he was in, and at once sought safety at the horns of the altar, and refused to come thence until Solomon had sworn his

life should be spared. He was released. If he should show himself a worthy man, he should live; "but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die."

Closely following on the settlement of this event, David, perceiving his days were nearly over, called Solomon, and gave him that memorable charge which is recorded in the books of Kings and Chronicles. It contains advice to the young king, relative to a life of righteousness; how he should behave to his father's friends and enemies. He also gave him the pattern of the Temple, that object so near to David's heart. So David died, and Solomon reigned alone as king of Israel. It is painful to find how unrelenting he was to his father's foes and his own. The first who felt his power was his brother Adonijah. In an unfortunate time, he preferred a petition through Bathsheba to the king. Solomon's anger was greatly kindled. "God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this word against his own life." He was slain. The same summary method of revenging wrongs was practised upon the other conspirators. Abiathar, because he was a priest, was not put to death; but Joab was slain while clinging to the horns of the altar; and Shimei was put to death for leaving the city in a moment of forgetfulness. It is true that David had ".laid this burden upon him," but how harshly the words sound from David on the bed of death, "Let not Joab's hoar head go down to the grave in peace." . . . "But Shimei's hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood." Even David, that man after God's own heart, and Solomon, so wise, knew only the law of retribution, "An eye for an eye."

The ark was placed in a tent in Jerusalem, but the tabernacle was still in Gibeon, and Solomon and the congregation sought unto it, and offered there a thousand burnt-offerings upon the altar. After the impressive religious ceremony of that day, as Solomon slept in Gibeon, the Lord appeared to him, and said, "Ask what I shall give thee." Solomon, in reply, recounted the various mercies showed unto his father during his reign of forty years, mentioned his own youth, and acknowledged the inability of man to govern so great a nation as Israel had become. He did not need riches or power; but without "an understanding heart to judge so great a a people," he must go wrong. He, therefore, asked for knowledge, —knowledge to discern the good from the evil, to administer true justice and judgment to the people. And so he was promised not a wise and understanding heart alone, but riches and honour, such as no one before him had had, nor any that should come after him should have. Immediately upon his return to Jerusalem, he obtained great renown for his wisdom in judging the dispute between the two harlots. And as for riches, he made silver and

gold to be as plenteous as stones, and "cedar trees as the sycamore trees that are in the vale for abundance." He obtained a wife from Egypt (his first downward step), and this opened up the treasures and traffic of that country to Solomon. And thence he drew his fourteen hundred chariots, at six hundred shekels of silver a piece; and his twelve thousand horses, at one hundred and fifty shekels each; besides horses for presents to neighbouring kings, and four thousand to fill the stalls which belonged to himself. Thence, also, were obtained the supplies of linen, by means of merchants. Solomon had still the promise of his father to fulfil, and to this he turned all the energies and riches of the country. Artificers and materials were obtained from foreign as well as home sources. Gold, silver, cedar, and all precious substances were lavished upon that house of the Lord, which should be the joy and delight of every son of Israel. Under the persevering will of Solomon, the gorgeous fabric silently grew in its splendour, and was, indeed, worthy to be called *the Temple of the Lord*. When completed, the noble building was dedicated to the purposes of religion, with such unwonted display as Solomon only could have produced. The animals sacrificed were almost numberless; and Solomon, and all Israel with him, held a feast for "seven days and seven days, even fourteen days." But this building was not the only one that Solomon took in hand. He built a house for Pharoah's daughter; he built, also, his own house in thirteen years; he built a house in the forest of Lebanon; and he built "a porch of pillars," and a porch where he might judge. All these were of costly stones, "sawed with saws, even from the foundation unto the coping."

And now Solomon's power was at its highest. He was at peace with all the hereditary foes of his land. The Temple was finished The king's palaces were completed. His trade to Egypt, to Tyre and to the Red Sea was great. The land appeared full of riches, of chariots, and of horsemen; and, to complete the picture of prosperity and happiness, God again renewed his covenant to the king, —"If thou wilt keep my statutes and judgments, I will establish thy throne for ever." Solomon's fame continued to spread; the Queen of Sheba came to behold his magnificence, and to prove his wisdom with hard questions. Tribute flowed in from many quarters; "They brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses and mules, a rate year by year."

"*But* Solomon loved many strange women." And when he was old, they turned away his heart from God to serve the idols of the neighbouring nations,—Ashtaroth, and Milcom, and Chemosh, and Molech; and so he did evil in the sight of the Lord. Threatenings

came from God, and trouble and rebellion from among his people. "The Lord stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad, the Edomite." "God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon, the son of Eliadah," who abhorred Israel. And yet another, Jeroboam, who lifted up his hand against the king, and then fled to Egypt. These were some of the troubles that came upon Solomon in his old age. With the threat, "Because thou hast not kept my covenant, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee," ringing in his ears, he could see his people ripe for rebellion, and his hands too feeble to suppress it. He could see his son quite unfit to govern so great a people, and Jeroboam ready at any moment to come up out of Egypt, and rend the ten tribes, at least, from his vain son's grasp. What a humiliation! Solomon, the magnificent and the wise, had made his kingdom famous through the earth, had established his throne, as he thought, for ever; and now, as his hands waxed feeble, his kingdom began to show signs of instability. The wise man had a fool to his son, who, though he had been determined to fulfil God's threatenings, could not have acted in a manner more calculated to bring about rebellion and division. Solomon died. He slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David, his father. This is all we know. Did he repent of his great sin? Did he abolish the idols which were in the land? Did he die "in sure and certain hope?" We cannot tell, and we dare not surmise. To us the grave is too hallowed for erring man to question too closely of the condition of the souls of our brethren departed. It concerns us to look to ourselves and the living. We may surely learn a lesson when we look at Solomon. His glory, his wisdom, his riches, his power preserved him not from idolatry. Had he not committed that first sin of intermarrying with idolators, his life would have been truly great, and his latter days peace. "Righteousness exalteth . . . . but sin is a reproach." These are his own words, and we cannot do better than read those Proverbs of his, as we read his life. Whether Solomon wrote the book called Ecclesiastes, we cannot decide,—perhaps not,—but whoever may have been its author, it must always be studied as a commentary on the life of him whose name is so often linked with it.

E. M. C.

[We are sorry to be obliged to differ in one respect, and that an important one, from the writer of this very interesting and admirable paper on the life of Solomon; for while the career of the wise king is, indeed, a melancholy one to contemplate, yet we do not think he is to be regarded, as the author would seem to imply, as altogether an apostate. He had unlimited means of gratifying his luxurious desires, and he used them so immoderately and unwisely as to be led fearfully astray. But the Book of Ecclesiastes is, as we think truly, ascribed to

him; and the confessions in that book (chap. ii. 1—10) are concluded by expressions which plainly indicate that the author of it had not fallen away from the true faith, but that he returned from all his vain searches after pleasure, and a bitterly disappointing experience of the vanity of earthly enjoyments, to find the forgiving love of God, and in it the true and only source of happiness.

There seems no reason to doubt that Solomon was the author of the book which gives us this insight into his recovery from his grievous fall. The first verse distinctly describes the Book of Ecclesiastes as "the words of the preacher, the son of David, King of Jerusalem," and the description contained in it of the wisdom, riches, writings, and works of the author, is applicable only to him. The concurrent testimony both of Jewish and Christian tradition, corroborate this internal evidence; and it was only by a few critics of the last century that doubts were suggested as to its authenticity. The *period* of his life at which Solomon wrote the book is determined by the nature of its contents; for it was the fruit of the discovery of his own errors, and his deep penitence for his guilt and folly which led him to assume the office of the Preacher.—EDITORS.]

THE PREPARATION OF A LESSON.

"PREPARE thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field, and afterwards build thy house." Prov. xxiv. 27.

The principle involved in these words is of wide, if not of universal application. Unless you would have your work a failure, and your labour very weariness, then ere you begin, not only count the cost, but get ready the materials to your hand.

Most emphatically is it true in reference to Sunday-school teaching. An unprepared teacher in his class is no wiser, nor likely to be more successful, than a builder who should have to go in search of bricks, or tools, or mortar, each time the need of them occurred in his work. Since the era at which a Sunday-school literature began to exist, so much has been said and written on the subject of the preparation of lessons, of its necessity, its influence, and its value, that it would seem presumptuous to attempt to throw additional light upon it, or to press its importance by any additional motive upon those whom it concerns.

Yet as actual experience is never utterly worthless, the suggestion of plans which have been pursued, with occasional modifications, for more than ten years, and with some encouraging measure of success, may possibly not be unacceptable to younger teachers, who fully admit the duty of the preparation of lessons, but are often at a loss how to commence it. Let me then at once remark, that what I have to say refers exclusively to the private preparation of a teacher. And this, not because I undervalue either a mutual, or what may be

called a ministerial preparation, but simply because it has never happened to me to share the advantages of either; and also because I believe, that to make such opportunities really a blessing, they must be the stimulant to, and not the substitute for, the individual study and preparation of the lesson by the teacher.

Perhaps it may be useful to arrange the subject thus:—

I. What is it we have to do?

II. How are we to do it?

I. What is it we have to do? It is to prepare a *lesson*. And what is a lesson in a Sunday-school sense? It is not a sermon, still less an essay; it is not an oration, nor a string of amusing anecdotes; but it is to take a portion of the truth of God, generally directly from his Word, but occasionally embodied in a collect or hymn, and to seek by patient effort, combined with earnest prayer, so to present it to the children of our classes, as that it may instruct their minds, interest their feelings, and affect their hearts. Of course the form of a lesson must be more or less varied, according to the age and attainments of the children or young people, who are to receive it; but it should be ever borne in mind in preparation, even for the most advanced, that the office of a teacher, especially of a female teacher, is not the authoritative announcement of Divine truth, but rather the mutual search, in dependence on the teaching of the Holy Spirit, for the will and mind of God, as revealed in his Word. With this brief description of "what it is we have to do," let us pass to our more immediate topic for consideration,

II. How are we to do it? in other words, What is it to prepare a lesson? In answering this enquiry, by reference to the plan which has been tested by myself, and found to work successfully, I must plead, in apology for the egotism, the difficulty of narrating a personal history in general terms, and the greater directness the first person singular gives, to what shall be a simple record of facts "from the teacher's own experience."

I look then upon the preparation for my Sabbath work, as *general* and *particular*. The *general* preparation is on this wise. Very early in the week, seldom later than Monday morning, I take the lesson for the following Sunday as my private Scripture reading. Then, asking for the Holy Spirit's guidance, I try to find out what is its message to *me*, and to enquire what *God would teach* by this portion of his Word. The next day, still as a part of private devotional exercises, I look prayerfully at the passage with reference to the class I have to teach. I think of their abilities, their characters, and any peculiarity in the circumstances of any of them, which may be known to me, and seek out what leading lesson the passage brings before the mind, and how it may be made available for their instruc-

tion. Thus I have the *subject* worked, as it were, into my mind, and thoughts, illustrations, and anecdotes, met with in daily life, are questioned as they pass, to see if they are likely to be useful.

The more definite and *particular* preparation, is usually the work of Thursday. Then for the first time, I consult Notes, Commentaries, Geographies, and other helps, and arrange the information I have gained, and the illustrations I wish to use. On Saturday, the whole is gone over, and is, as a rule, so made my own as to preclude the necessity for using notes during the delivery of the lesson, and if no one else is benefited by the result of the entire process, I have at least myself gained sufficient advantages to compensate me for the time and thought I have devoted to it, and am enabled thankfully to acknowledge, week by week, that my labour, if such it may be called, has "not been in vain."

Probably, the thought of many minds on reading the above, would be, "how much leisure time that teacher must have, to give to her lesson," and I freely confess, that my circumstances in this respect, are very different from those of many others, and that having more, of me there may be justly more required. And yet in practice, it would not be found to occupy so large a portion of time, as it appears to do in the narration. A considerable portion of the preparation, and that by no means the least important, forms a part of the retirement for devotional purposes, which every Christian must secure, if he would have his soul prosper and be in health. And were the prayerful consideration of the lesson for the teacher's own soul's benefit, and for the children's good, regularly attended to in the early part of the week, and *borne in mind* throughout it, the more definite preparation need not necessarily occupy a large amount of time, inasmuch as the higher and spiritual lesson having been grasped by prayerful meditation and constant mental reference, the drapery and form of the lesson might comparatively soon be attained. "In all labour there is profit," but in none so much as in the search for wisdom as for "hid treasure," not for selfish enrichment, but for mutual benefit and glad distribution. And should a teacher ever be tempted to think that the lesson he has to teach is so familiar, that preparation is not needed, he is sacrificing his personal interest, just as much as his relative duty. It is related of the late Dr. Arnold, that when remonstrated with by a friend, for continuing the study of Greek, he replied, "I read not because I think I have not *enough* of water to supply my pupils' wants, but because I consider it much better for them that they should drink out of a *running stream*, than out of a stagnant pool." And though we may possibly have sufficient information on any particular passage and be endowed with sufficient readiness to bring that information into

play, yet without direct, positive, prayerful preparation, the lesson must inevitably be wanting in freshness, in point, and in power. No one who has not made the experiment, can imagine the benefit to one's own mind and heart, of the systematic study of God's Word, which is induced by a careful preparation of Sunday school lessons; and much as I have cause to value a faithful ministry, and very gratefully, as I trust, I appreciate it, I am not sure that I have not learned more of the "infinite sweetness" of the Book of books, through the happy hours spent in study for my Sabbath work, than even by the teaching that I am privileged myself to receive, and which has been so great a blessing to me.

I have not referred to books which may, or ought to be, used in the preparation of Sunday school lessons. They are now so numerous, and so easily to be obtained, that scarcely any one need be without such aid in some shape or other; and perhaps the danger occasionally, rather lies in the indolent acceptance of whatever the "Notes," or commentary, offers, without the individual effort which brings such an abundant recompense. There is room for the amplest study and the farthest reach of thought, in connection with this work; but where the opportunity or the ability for such is not given, let us be encouraged to know that wisdom is the promised gift of God in answer to prayer; that the Holy Spirit is the only effectual Teacher of his own Word, and is pledged to us to "guide us into all truth;" that "the preparation of the heart in man, is from the Lord," and that oftentimes "to have prayed well," will be found "to have studied well." Let us not offer unto our God "that which costs us nothing;" but while giving "attendance to reading," let us also "give ourselves unto prayer," and then, "having done all," under the sense of ignorance which knowledge will awaken, and of short comings which prayer will unveil, let us cast ourselves before the throne of grace, and humbly confess, "we are unprofitable servants," and earnestly plead, "enter not into judgment with thy servants, O Lord."

Thus *prepared*, "God, the faithful God," will fulfil his promise, "My Word shall not return unto me void; it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it;" and privileged to win for Him some of the trophies of this His sword, let us take them to His feet, and as we lay them down exclaim, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory."

Dora.

[We have great pleasure in publishing this Paper, which divided the prize with another on the same subject, awarded for the best Essay "on the Preparation of a Lesson" by the Editor of the TEACHER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE, in which the other Essay was printed in December last.—EDITORS.]

SCRIPTURE PHILOLOGY.

No. VI.—Our Lord's Idioms.—(*Continued.*)

Matt. xxvi. 26. "Take, eat, *this is my body.*"

That false interpretations of these six short words should have not only occasioned bitter animosities, but even "resistance unto blood" it not less surprising than well known. To suppose, then that a little previous study of the usages of the sacred language in particular would have obviated all this, seems to imply too much simplicity; and yet there is really much reason to think so. The rulers in the Roman, Lutheran, and English Churches, were none of them of that nation to which the Hebrew language belonged, and most of them were unacquainted with it. Besides, a man may learn Hebrew so as to be able to read and to speak it, and yet be unacquainted with the philology of the language;—he may have neglected it as a thing unimportant, but it is not so.

Some of our English reformers, as Cranmer, and Latimer learning in this matter from him, did look at the words, "this is my body," as figurative; and so Cranmer comes to call the figure "Sacramental language."

It seems to us that though we have here a very near approach to the solution, that solution of the point of the peculiarity of the phrase is not quite complete. We put it as a question, rather than an assertion, since such great names are involved, is it not more truthful and correct to say, this is the language of symbols, rather than of sacraments; of symbols, in general, and not of sacramental symbols in particular?

Let us look at a few examples in proof. Take Joseph's interpretation of the symbols in Pharoah's dream, as the first that occurs, "the seven good ears *are* seven years;" and again, "the seven good kine *are* seven years," Gen. xli. 26. Here is the same peculiarity of language; the symbol is spoken of as if it were identically the thing signified. Next, we may open our great Book further on in the biography of Aaron. He made a symbol, the Golden Calf, and thus he speaks of it, "These *be* thy gods, O Israel, that brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," Exodus xxxii. 4, as if he identified the image of God with the great Deliverer Himself. Let us skip over others to Daniel's, next—his symbol of kings and of kingdoms in that wonderful Image,—pointing to it, he says to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou *art* this head of gold," Dan. ii. 38. One more only will be needful, and that from the New Testament. "The seven candlesticks *are* the seven Churches, and the seven stars *are* the angels of the seven

Churches" (alluding to the orders in the *synagogues*.) Now, taking this light with us, and these examples of the Jews' way of speaking in relation to all symbols, who can fail to see at once the source, and propriety, and meaning of the simple words, "this *is* my body?"

Instead of enlarging further on the idiom, except to say that it is not confined to the Jewish mode of speaking, we trust it will be acceptable to our readers that we take the opportunity to set forth the rite fully, yet briefly, to which the words refer.

THE LORD'S SUPPER: what it is.

It has rarely happened that *one* end has fulfilled the institution of God, pleasant as it would be to find it so, for the sake of our limited mental powers. Take for example his first ordinance,—Woman. "Let us make him (man) a help meet for him." A good and sufficient reason this; but there was more, and greater behind; to wit, the propagation of the human species. And thus it is with the Lord's Supper; "do this *in remembrance* of me." But to regard the rite *only* as a memorial, does not satisfy the *use*, though this is Jacob Abbott's fancy. (He says, "If the Lord had plucked a leaf from a tree, it would have been the same thing, with the same injunction attached." No, by no means.)

"Do *this* in remembrance." Do what? Break bread, pour out wine, eat and drink, "this is my body which is given for you." Another idea additional has now been raised: the words imply, "I have given my free life for your forfeited life,—feed on this truth."

Do this; and do it *as* I do it: observe I "BLESS." Hence springs the *Eucharistic* element of the rite. And so one might go on, till it was shown that the Institution was

1.—Commemorative; and 2.—Festive, as THE LORD'S SUPPER.

3.—Corporate; and 4.—Social, as THE COMMUNION.

5.—Federal; and 6.—Constringent, as THE SACRAMENT.

7.—Devotional; and 8.—Edifying, as THE EUCHARIST.

9.—Centralizing; and 10.—Distinguishing, as "A BADGE OF OUR PROFESSION."

11.—Didactic; and 12.—Significant, as a SYMBOL OF OUR FAITH.

Now, all these are *primary* ideas in "the Lord's Supper," though not all THE primary idea, which we take to be the symbolical one; and the reason why this has become a complicated subject is, that writers treat of these different aspects of the rite separately, and so their statements do not focalise, except in as much as they may all be said to refer to the same ordinance. Biblical students all find it so; so Hooker found it; "every man's wit hath taken hold of some special consideration above the rest," (See his "Ecclesiastical Polity.")

Treating of the rite according to "the *names*," would not strictly take in all the aspects; but the names are four,—

1.—The Lord's Supper.

2.—The Communion.

3.—The Eucharist.

4.—The Sacrament.

1.—"The Lord's Supper." The name intimates that the rite is FESTIVE: so was the Passover out of which it sprung; and the bread broken was "unleavened" Passover-cake, 1 Cor. v. 8.

A FEAST, ("therefore, let us keep the feast," Paul), but a *Sacrificial feast*; yet only *symbolically*, not typical, not anti-typical, but *commemorative* of the one true and only sacrifice. And, for as much as the sacrifices were eaten, as the Passover for instance, and literally to eat the flesh of Christ, would be both against nature, and useless, too, in this commemoratively and symbolically sacrificial feast, what we cannot eat is replaced, and represented by what we can. This naturally blends with

2.—"The COMMUNION," the corporate and *social* aspect of the rite; for κοινωνια, from κοινος, shared in common, expresses not chiefly the English idea of fellowship, and mutual sympathy, but a joint participation of the same benefits; to wit, of reconciliation to God, through the propitiation; and hence God's paternal regard, and his Spirit's influences of purity, freedom, and love. And this COMMEMORATION of a spiritual feast upon a sacrifice, corresponds as "*the communion*," with the old Lectisternia, where an empty couch for the Deity Himself, now appeased by the sacrifice, was prepared at the table; or his image placed thereon, if one was at hand, that the fellowship of the whole body, including the Head, might be visibly complete.

"The COMMUNION," then, is not a sacrificial feast, but the festive *commemoration* of "the sacrifice of the death of Christ," after a social manner, or by the whole *body* who avail themselves of the benefit. The true sacrifice was "the *one* offering of Himself, ONCE offered," the time answering to "the strewing of the couches," or Lectisternia was the pause between the entering "into the true Holy places," and the effusion at Pentecost; and the true spiritual feast of our salvation, was the *Pentecostal effusion itself*, not yet suspended or exhausted "for even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for *us*, therefore let *us keep* the feast." And this fitly introduces the next aspect of the rite, namely, as in

3.—"THE EUCHARIST."

And here it is chiefly important to know who, or what is "*blessed*;" whether the Lord our God, or the bread and wine, and how these elements can be used in blessing.

Take St. Paul, first, in 1 Cor. xi. 23. Compare this his *careful* recapitulation with Matthew's, Mark's, and Luke's statements, and this plain fact will come out, namely, that there was no blessing *the bread and wine at all*, but only a blessing God, *along with the use* of the bread and wine in the *sacred* festival, which thus, and thus only, is "THE EUCHARIST." It will be seen that the words "blessed," and "gave thanks," are used indiscriminately, and are synonymous; there can be no such thing as blessed (happy) bread and wine, any more than there can be holy wood and stone. There is a blessed God! and the Christian is a blessed man. We are bound, if we think ourselves men, not children, in Christ, to have this knowledge. "In understanding, be men," it is written. Now to pass by the illustrations that the THANK-OFFERINGS of the Old Testament give us of the use of such elements in "*worship*," we are accustomed ourselves to drink each other's health in a glass of wine. The same practice obtained of old among the British, in the circulation, with much ceremony, of the Hirlas Horn. The knightly stirrup-cup, too, of Norman use, awaited at the host's lip the "*Farewell*," a blessing from the host upon his departing guests. And if the mother vine may be allowed (under favour), to speak for herself, we may get a hint from that pregnant remonstrance, "Shall I lose my sweetness, wherewith they *cheer* both God and man, and go to reign over the trees!"

Hence, then, and not because the wine was blessed, the rite is named "the EUCHARIST," and I do not understand the Lord's Supper to be "a MEANS OF GRACE," *otherwise* than as this fact is comprehended in its names, and nature generally. All means of grace, as such, differ among themselves in their effects. Prayer is not like preaching in its direct operation on the soul; nor does preaching act precisely upon the mind like "the Lord's Supper;" but to deny to the Lord's Supper what we concede to prayer, and preaching, when it embodies both, and more than both, is an omission to say the least of it, and I am afraid a very blind one.

4.—The SACRAMENT.

The Sacramentum, we know, was the pledge; the money paid into court before trying the cause which BOUND the parties; the soldier's enlisting piece of coin; the domestic servant's shilling upon hiring; by it, in each instance, the party is bound, and it is the "seal," and "pledge" of the implied reward on the part of the binder: and so it becomes relatively *federal*, and of the nature of the sacrament of a *covenant*. "This is the *new covenant* in my blood."

5.—The SYMBOLICAL and didactic character of the rite is noticed by St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 26, "καταγγελετε," "Ye *preach* the Lord's death till He come," so the word is usually rendered. And this I

take to be a very principal use of the ordinance. If you can conceive of Christ's living body to become dumb; if you can imagine the inspired volume to be lost or unintelligible; still the mystical body and blood of Christ will declare and preach the Gospel, saying, *in a voice understood by all languages*, "If when we sinners were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the *death* of his Son, much more being reconciled shall we be saved by his life." Even so, Amen!

It is more than a little interesting and pleasant to observe and feel, as we use it, that in some part or other of our Communion Service, one and all these aspects of this Great Rite of the Christian Church are alluded to and embodied.

Tenby. E. N. S.

SCENES IN PALESTINE, AND THE LESSONS CONNECTED WITH THEM.

No. III.

HEBRON.

It will not surprise our readers to find that one of these papers is to be devoted to the city of Hebron. The spot is one so rich in association, so important in its natural position, and so fruitful in suggestive spiritual teaching, that, on every ground, it seems almost to demand the attentive consideration of the careful student of the Bible. More than this, it will open out to us an entirely new view of that Holy Land which we are now in reflection traversing. It was quite unlike Mahanaim; and, although in some points similar, differed, nevertheless, from Jezreel. It was situated in another part of the promised land. To understand its physical features, we must picture to ourselves an altogether new scene to either of those upon which our eyes in thought have rested. It was the early home of the patriarchs. It is the centre of many events which stand out prominently, even amidst the stirring scenes with which Jewish history is so thickly studded. It seems to be most familiar to us, and yet our knowledge of it, perhaps, is only indistinct and imperfect. It was the ancient Kirjath Arba, the place in which the son of promise to Abraham finished his earthly course, in the presence of his reconciled sons. "And Jacob came unto Isaac, his father, unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned. And the days of Isaac were an

hundred and fourscore years. And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days, and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him," Gen. xxxv. 27.

The natural position of Hebron was important; it was the first city of any magnitude after crossing the frontier from the wilderness of the south; and hence it will be necessary, perhaps, in order to convey, if possible, some description of its physical situation, that we should briefly describe this southern boundary of Palestine. Dr. Stanley tells us that "nothing can be more gradual than the approach from the wilderness of the south to Palestine." The change is almost imperceptible; the one almost melts away into the other. Just as on some summer's night, we can scarcely fix where sunset fades into twilight, and twilight into night, although the east is already veiled in gloom, whilst the golden light is still lingering in the west; so is it difficult to determine just where the wilderness proper should be said to cease, and Palestine proper to begin. It was not unfrequently styled the land of Goshen, or the borders, although it was more commonly spoken of as the south, or the south country. Thus we read that "Abraham went up out of Egypt into the south," Gen. xiii. 1; and that "Isaac dwelt in the south country," Gen. xxiv. 62. It was the territory especially adapted for the rearing and sustenance of cattle. Here the patriarchs tended and fed their flocks. Nor can this be a matter of surprise, for it was a country enriched with wells—treasures beyond all others of value in the East—the scenes of some of the most memorable incidents in Holy Scripture. This particular part of Palestine was originally held by the Amalekites. Nabal was a borderer upon this wilderness, and within it were many stations—posting-places we should call them—between Egypt and Palestine. This hill country, we are told, is the part of Palestine which best illustrates its general scenery,—the rounded hills, the broad valleys, the scanty vegetation. The villages and the wells, which are so numerous, are, perhaps, to be regarded as among the special characteristics of the Holy Land. Here it was that the tribe of Judah had their portion with Simeon, Dan, and Benjamin, immediately around them. From this secure position they were never displaced, not even during the troublous times of the Judges. In those hills and caves David hid himself, when "hunted as a partridge upon the mountains." Assyria, with her swarms of soldiers, ravaged the north; Rome subdued Galilee and Samaria; but Judah remained, the last portion of the hallowed country which yielded to the overwhelming power of the foe.

It is highly interesting to remember that a vine is the natural figure which represents the kingdom of Judah. We are told,

indeed,—and it is a curious and instructive fact,—by Dr. Stanley, that, even to this day, "the grapes of Judah still mark the tombstones of the Hebron race, in their oldest European cemetery at Prague." Thus we see how apposite the blessing was conferred by the dying patriarch upon his son Judah,—"Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise . . , binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine, he washed his garments in wine and his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk," Gen. xlix. 9, 11, 12. The Jewish vineyards were marked by watch-towers and walls. This produce was so valuable, that much pains and care were taken in the cultivation of the fruit, which sometimes attained a remarkable growth. Thus we read of the grapes of Eshcol, the sample brought to the journeying Israelites of what the promised Canaan could yield. And thus God, anxious to describe his own Divine care for them, and their ingratitude, selected the image of a vineyard to convey his sad and suitable rebuke by the mouth of the prophet. "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it; wherefore when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? . . . For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and He looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry," Is. v. 3, 4, 7.

This peculiar feature of the land brings us to Hebron, which was regarded as the primæval seat of the vine. Here it flourished in great abundance. This spot was the earliest seat of civilised life, not only in Judah, but also in Palestine; its very name means "society." From the Book of Genesis, we find that it was the ancient seat of Ephron, the Hittite. It was the first home of Abraham, after leaving Ur of the Chaldees. Not far from it the spies sent to report upon the land must have passed; for the valley of Eshcol was close at hand. Its very situation gave it this natural prominence in history. Every traveller from the desert, we are told, is still struck by the sight of the pleasant vale, with its orchards, and vineyards, and numerous wells,—with its well-known groves of oaks, which, even in ages long past away, have attracted the eyes of the travellers. It rose on a gentle eminence above the dry and withered valleys of the east of Judæa, and very similar in this respect to Mahanaim, nestled on the slope of an adjacent ravine.

This will suffice for a brief geographical description of the spot. We go on now to select some of those historical incidents, of which

it was the theatre, which will appeal not only to our understandings but to our hearts. Hebron is rich in important events, so much so, that even to allude to them all, would be impossible within the limits of this paper. The first, however, upon which it seems to us desirable to fasten, is the death of Sarah. Abraham's wife finished her earthly course at Hebron. "And Sarah died in Kirjath Arba, the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan; and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her." Gen. xxiii. 2. In consequence of this, the cave of Machpelah was purchased by the patriarch from Ephron the Hittite, and there, to this day, what remains of the precious dust of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, still reposes until the resurrection morn. It seems to be an instinct in our nature, to reverence the dead, and the place of their sepulture. What thoughts are often centred round the family grave? What scenes of the past does it not frequently recall? And perhaps no spot—unless it be the hewn rock in the garden of Gethsemane—is more fruitful in thoughtful and blessed memories, than the cave of Machpelah; it speaks to us as Christians of the unerring fulfilment of God's promises. Regarding the burial place of their ancestors, we know how "the little one became a thousand," and the adopted race multiplied "as the sand upon the sea shore in multitude." We have lived indeed to see the realization of still nobler promises. In Abraham's seed, in Sarah's offspring, all nations of the earth have been blessed. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them." Heb. xi. 13. Learn we to trust that Lord in whom they believed, and remembering how Sarah, the first of all, was buried in Machpelah's cave, not only amidst the natural expression of domestic grief, but as it were in the earliest dawn of faith, only in the glimmering of spiritual light and promise, "let us count Him faithful who has promised," and always believe that "what He has promised, He will also most surely perform."

2. We pass over a long interval of time, and are met by another circumstance in connection with Hebron, which is too striking for our present object to be overlooked. The circumstance to which allusion is made, is related in the xiv. chapter of Joshua, v. 6—13. Out of the vast multitudes that left Egypt, two alone, Joshua and Caleb, were permitted to enter the land of promise. The reasons for this exception, cannot be unfamiliar to any who read these pages. It was because, whilst their few companions who were sent with them as spies "made the heart of the people melt, they wholly followed the Lord their God." Joshua xiv. 8. Such honest testimony was signally rewarded—to Joshua was assigned the leadership of Israel, after the death of Moses; to Caleb at his own request,

this city of Hebron was made over as a lasting possession. When the rest of the conquered territory was about to be divided on the west of Jordan, and the land had rest from war, then "Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb, the son of Jephunah, Hebron for an inheritance; Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb, the son of Jephunah the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel." Joshua xiv. 13, 14. This city therefore, under this aspect, is a witness of God's purpose to reward integrity of heart and fidelity. We can scarcely think of Hebron without viewing it as a mark which has not yet lost its significance, of the Almighty's approval of singleness of purpose when assailed by opposition. We sometimes find it difficult to understand exactly how the Apostolic words are true, that "Godliness has the promise of the life that now is." 1 Tim. iv. 8. The city of Hebron is a commentary upon that statement; the gift of it to Caleb, is an example of its truth, and we are taught thereby to rest assured, that not only in heaven, but even now upon earth, the Almighty Lord, after his infinite wisdom, rewards the faithful.

3. Another historical allusion will teach us a lesson of a very different character. Times had strangely altered. Hebron, in the progress of change and circumstances, must have risen rapidly into importance, and in the days of the monarchy, must have worn a different aspect to that which it presented in the period of the Judges. It occupied a most memorable place in national history in king David's reign. During the rebellion which followed the death of Saul, and when there were rival claimants for the throne, it was at Hebron that, for seven years and six months, David fixed the seat of government. 2 Sam. ii. 11. It was the rallying point for the faithful adherents to the rightful sovereign; and when it was neither safe nor possible to dwell at Jerusalem, the son of Jesse found a royal shelter within the walls of Hebron. It would hold therefore, if for no other reason, yet for this, a foremost place in the history of the Holy Land. And this well known event is fruitful in suggestive teaching. Does it not remind us that God's best loved ones are sometimes most sorely afflicted, but that in their deepest sorrows there is always some place of rest provided, within which they are protected by his strength and love? Hebron is to us, if the witness of one promise fulfilled, no less forcibly our witness of the accomplishment of another. It brings to our mind thatmost thrilling Psalm, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." Psalm cxi. David's sojourn at Hebron, was a most valuable preparation for the duties which afterwards fell upon him; and though to us "no chastening can seem for the present to be joyous,

but grievous," yet in the retrospect of our sorrow, we can often discern how we were supported, because beneath us were placed the everlasting arms; nay, God in our banishment from joy, often provides for us, as He did for David, some friendly Hebron, where, safe in his keeping, we abide securely until the calamity be overpast.

4. Once more the city, at present under our review, is suggestive of another, different, but perhaps still more valuable, practical thought. Under the Jewish law, "six cities were set apart; three on the east and three on the west of the Jordan, to which the manslayer might repair who should kill his neighbour unawares and hated him not in times past, and reaching one of these cities, might live." They bore the well-known names of "cities of refuge." Joshua xx. 24. Of these Hebron was one. It was the grateful resort of the unwilling murderer, and afforded him that security which only five other spots in Palestine were permitted by the law to extend. Not to enter upon all the typical significance attached to those cities, Hebron, in its political aspect, must forcibly remind us of Christ. He is the refuge to which we, under a sense of blood-guiltiness, must fly. He is the only sure abiding-place for those who are conscious that they have destroyed their own priceless soul, but that in Him can pardon and rest be found. Let us cherish this great truth, whenever the city of Hebron is brought before us, "O Israel! thou hast destroyed thyself, but in Me is thine help." The most complete self-sacrifice; the highest devotion to our chosen work as shepherds of his lambs; the casting with an unsparing hand, all that we possess into his treasury; will not procure for us the sense of inward peace and certain security, which such a living faith in Christ as our Hebron, through his grace, will shed abroad in our hearts. Nor is it beneath our observation to notice, that the peaceful melting away of the frontier land which skirts upon Palestine; the imperceptible change, almost of the desert, for a soil flowing with milk and honey, is a picture of the life of the believer. Gradually in his pilgrimage he crosses the desert. Through snow and sunshine, he wends his way from bondage to liberty; until gently, for the most part, he reaches the frontiers of the heavenly Canaan, into which he is welcomed by his Lord, to realize the words of Solomon, "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

THOUGHTS ON SCRIPTURE SUBJECTS.

THE SYNAGOGUE.

CHRISTIANITY is the development and perfection of Judaism. It fulfilled its prophecies, realized its shadows, perfected its precepts, and denounced and abolished its corruptions: but there were many external and non-essential things which the New Dispensation incorporated, or used as convenient and advantageous. Among these were its synagogues, where they were not closed by the animosity of Jewish officers. There are several allusions to customs and appointments of the synagogue in the Apostolic Epistles which are overlooked by the reader of the English translation only.

The synagogue was thus instituted:—when there were ten men of leisure in any given place, that constituted it a city, and there a synagogue must be built. Of these ten, three must be chosen to the chief office of "Rulers of the synagogue," or "Elders,"—another to the office of "Angel," or Minister, or Bishop—"Επισκοπος,"—so called because it devolved on him to *overlook* the readers of the law and the prophets in public worship, to see that they read correctly; as well as to offer the prayers, and to lead the psalm-singing. Then followed the Deacons, who had to collect and distribute the alms, and were called pastors. The three Elders were judges in some matters temporal; sitting as such on the "bench," with a suitable "footstool" corresponding to the higher elevation of their seat.

Now, as we may trace a rudiment of the Lord's supper in the rite of the passover, and of Christian baptism in the "baptisms" in use among the Jews, as recognised Heb. vi. 2 and elsewhere, so we may perceive the origin, and more than the origin, in some cases of Christian offices and practices, in the corresponding offices and practices of the synagogue.

It is important to our understanding, for instance James ii. 2, 3, that we should be aware of the fact that, where they could, the Christian Jews still continued to use the same place of worship—"if there come into your *assembly*" the greek is *synagogue* "one having a gold ring, and one in goodly apparel . . . and ye say unto the poor man, stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool." Here, in this passage, not an occasion of public worship is alluded to; but an occasion in which two persons having a matter between them, come to the rulers of the synagogue to have it adjudicated. The passage has nothing to do with the pews in our modern places of worship. Again, in allusion to this tribunal of

the three elders, we read in Mark xiii. 9, "Ye shall be beaten in the synagogues." To this root may also be referred what St. Paul says to Timothy (1 Tim. v. 17), "let the elders that rule well, be accounted worthy of double honour"—and his charge about oppointing elders in every "city." And this reference to the primary institutions of the synagogue may be traced in many parts of St. Paul's writings and arrangements.

Again, in the Apocalypse, that wonderful composition of which St. Jerome said that it had "as many mysteries as words," the ground-work or "web" is Jewish worship—the "warp," God's providence—and the "woof," man's free agency: and then as the lengthened piece of tapestry draws to its completion, we see all along it, by the *crossing* of the two last, the embroidered figures in high relief that represent the troubles and triumphs of the church of Christ.

As an example, we have in the first chapter the *symbolical* Angel personifying Christ in the garment of the Jewish high priest, next we have the seven symbolical churches, or synagogues —for the synagogues were called churches—the two titles are used as synonymous therefore, here, see chapter iii. 9. And hence the use of the name "Angel," all through the seven symbolical epistles, standing for the overseers of the Christian church—that name "Angel," as we have seen, having been appropriated of old by each Jewish synagogue.

Symbolical churches we have called them; because as the whole book is symbolical, there is no *consistent* way of understanding the seven representations of churches otherwise; and thus understood, the corrections and encouragements are applicable to that, and every other age.

To look into the source of our rites and worship, is the only way to get a thorough insight of the whole, and to master the obscurities that hang over some of its particulars.

ACTS XV. 29.—"THINGS STRANGLED, AND BLOOD."

There is one thing almost unprecedented about this interdict of the First Council (so to call them), namely, that while the great majority of Christians think themselves free from its obligation, a few regard it as undoubtedly binding upon us, and scrupulously abstain from the use of "things strangled," or that have been killed in such a way as that the result is the same with regard to "the blood."

There is an argument, however, that seems to settle the question in favour of the majority, but which is very little known. It will be observed that four things are interdicted by St. James' "sen-

tence," and among these, "meat offered to idols," v. 29. Now, if it can be shown that WE are certainly free from "the yoke" in regard to this supposed obligation, it will follow of course that we are as much at liberty in regard to the rest, "fornication" excepted, which is forbidden by "the law of Christ" in general. And to show this we have only to refer to St. Paul, who expressly allows the use of idol-meats, provided they be eaten without "offence," that is to say, without leading the ignorant into the fatal error that there is no sin in joining in idolatrous rites, "with conscience of the idol," *i.e.*, a guilty conscience, 1 Cor. viii.

If this argument requires to be strengthened, which it really does not, for it is by itself sufficient, and fatal to the objection made to the use of *all* meats and drinks, St. Peter's "sentence" on the subject in debate, will confirm St. Paul. The discussion had only to do with "circumcision and the law of Moses,"—and not with early patriarchal observances—see v. 5., and St. Peter does not enjoin even these four things mentioned by St. James, but declares that the church present believed "that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ the Gentiles shall be saved even as they," the believing Jews.

There can be but one inference from these facts, which will appear very clearly to any one who will carefully look into the context, *i.e.* that St. James's object was to settle the "much disputing," v. 7., that was still going on; and so proposed these "articles of peace," which were accordingly agreed to, v. 29: and ordered to be sent forthwith *not to the Gentiles in general*, but to the converts in "Antioch, Syria, and Silesia," v. 23, among whom, and *whom alone*, of the Gentile churches, certain uncommissioned Jewish professors had been preaching the necessity of legal conformity, "subverting their souls;" v. 24.

Would it not be asked now by an apostle who should arise in the spirit and power of St. Peter, of any teacher who would interdict the use of meats with the blood in them, like game; or of blood itself, if it were used in diet—"why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the necks" of our brethren, by creating in them scruples of conscience, which when created must be respected, about things belonging only to those "rudiments of the world" now gone to decay but which formed a part of both the Jewish, and the Patriarchal religion? Besides, if there is to be abstinence of this sort, it must be done thoroughly; and then we must have butchers as religiously careful as those who prepare flesh for the shambles of the Jews.

Tenby. G. R. S

The Teacher in his School.

NOTES OF A LESSON ON CHARACTER, FOR A SENIOR CLASS.

It occurred to me, when thinking over subjects for my Servants' Bible Class, that a Lesson on Character might be both interesting and profitable; and as it seemed to fulfil the first of these conditions, when delivered, I venture to give a few simple notes of it, for the use of any teacher of a class old enough to feel the application of the subject, especially as I do not remember ever to have seen the topic treated as subject-matter for a lesson.

The introductory point was, WHAT IS MEANT BY CHARACTER? The original meaning of the Greek word is worth noting; character is "a mark" or impression, generally natural, not made artificially. Our character is the impression we make on other people's minds —not (as we all know) the result of *intentional* efforts to make that impression, but the effect of our daily natural conduct. This supplies a passing lesson on the uselessness (as well as sin) of hypocrisy, or even the lesser form of insincerity. Those who see us often cannot be long deceived as to our real character.

HOW IS CHARACTER DISPLAYED? Taking the word in our modern meaning of the qualities of our mind and heart, we see those qualities displayed in all our actions and words, and influencing our inmost thoughts and desires. When we have known a person any length of time, we can judge beforehand what they are likely to say and to do, under most circumstances; and even get some little insight into their motives, desires, and passions. All the business of life is the working out of the various characters of men.

How endless are THE VARIETIES OF CHARACTER! Look around at the features of this class. No two of you are alike. Even the members of the same family show a difference in form and figure. Just so with character. The differences may sometimes be less striking, but they are still clear and distinct. The active, the idle, the forward, the retiring, the affectionate, the cold, the generous, the selfish, and so on, each quality also showing endless *degrees*. Setting aside the unpleasant traits of character (and God never made men evil, Eccles. vii. 29), the variety, otherwise, is a source of pleasure and usefulness. A sameness of features would

weary us, much more a sameness of character. Let us learn to value the good qualities of other people in a generous spirit, not decrying one or the other because of their being deficient in something that we like. And let us also learn to study our own character—try to see ourselves as others see us. There is a danger of carrying this too far, and being taken up with thinking about ourselves (as some people are for ever worrying themselves about their health), but the fear of that danger should not keep us from wholesome self-examination. Shall we ask other people WHAT WE ARE? It is dangerous. The eye of such a friend need be very keen, and the tongue very gentle. It is better to look in God's mirror, James i. 23—25.

Is CHARACTER NATURAL, or ACQUIRED? David was a warm-hearted man, Solomon a self-indulgent one. Jehu was energetic, Peter also impetuous and eager, John affectionate, Martha active, Mary contemplative; these were clearly not all four alike. Mothers and nurses know how early character is indicated in children, each requiring some special management. Character, then, is chiefly natural; but it is also greatly influenced by circumstances. A child, whose parents indulge in some vice, can scarcely escape the contagion. And an idle, or passionate, or deceitful nurse may do untold injury to children by leading them to think lightly of such sins. Some young people, again, are so situated as to have no room for displaying the natural affections of their hearts, or the natural energy of their character, and so may, to some extent, lose that love or that energy.

But, after all these allowances, let us avoid the terrible mistake so many fall into, of speaking and thinking lightly of sins, because they are natural to them. "It is my way." It may be true that the sin easily besets us—that is no reason for giving way to it; and THAT is what people really mean by such expressions. God made no man evil. If Satan has spoiled God's work, are we WILLINGLY to remain his slaves? No, nor need we. The struggle may be very very hard, but—

CHARACTER MAY BE ALTERED, purposely changed more or less. Conversion does not bring all men to one exact likeness. Jewels are of many kinds, but all precious. The sun ripens all fruits, though of different appearance and flavour. The works of the Almighty were infinitely varied, but He pronounced ALL very good. Thus the differences of character may remain, when religion has touched the heart and is daily moulding the life. But there is ONE MODEL alone before us, the image of a Saviour; and though we must be still OURSELVES, we are to become LIKE HIM.

How is such a gradual change to be brought about? What can

we do to mould our own characters? Let us see what influences character.

I. Health. And this, certainly, is little under our control, but we must remember that health is yet in some *degree* the result of prudence and self-control. If so, care becomes a duty, so that no wilful neglect may bring on us the languor, indolence, or irritability that so often mark ill-health.

II. Occupations affect character. These are more under our own control; let us watch and see the daily influence of our daily work, not rashly to change our path of life, but at least to be on our guard.

III. Association and friendships influence character strongly; our friends are often chosen by us because of our character, but in return they re-act on the character. Rehoboam's young counsellors made him foolish and headstrong. But Joab never made David vindictive or sanguinary. So such influence may be resisted. The lesson however is this, let us be CAREFUL what friends we make what employment we engage in, that we may not be hindered. We are bidden to lay aside every weight—what shall we say of those who wilfully lay fresh weights on them, and put stumbling-blocks in their own paths? There are times, however, when we cannot help such trying circumstances; then let us try to turn them to good account. A ship by tacking, may force her way at last into the very teeth of the wind, which the skill of the helmsman thus compels to drive the ship against the blast. This is hard work; and so it is hard to struggle against one's self. Those around us may see us fail again and again, and know nothing of the deep self-abasement and earnest cries for pardon and help when we are alone with God. Let us be charitable then to the failings and short-comings of others, they may be fighting a very hard battle; they will win it at last, more than conquerors through Christ.

But the noblest of all means for elevating the character is COMMUNION WITH GOD. "They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." The more that can be said of us, the more shall we be like him. It is a poor ruined temple, this heart of ours, but the great architect comes and dwells there, and stone by stone it is rebuilt, to HIS GLORY.

I. G. F.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Good out of Evil.

The bee sucks sweet honey out of the bitterest herb: stars shine brighest in the darkest night: torches give the best light when beaten: grapes yield the most wine when most pressed: spices smell sweetest when pounded: vines are the better for bleeding: gold looks the brighter for scouring: and juniper smells sweetest in the fire.

So afflictions are the saints' best benefactors; for God will by them teach his children to suck sweet knowledge, sweet obedience, and sweet experience, out of all the bitter afflictions and trials He exercises them with: that scouring and rubbing which frets others, shall make them shine the brighter: that weight which crushes and keeps others under, shall but make them, like the palm tree, grow better and higher.

Brooks.

Frost.

On a winter evening, when the frost is setting in with growing intensity, and when the sun is now far past the meridian and gradually sinking in the western sky, there is a double reason why the ground grows every moment harder, and more impenetrable to the plough. On the one hand the frost of evening, with ever-increasing intensity is indurating the stiffened clods. On the other hand, the genial rays which alone can soften them, are every moment withdrawing and losing their enlivening power.

So the unconverted are under a double process of hardening. The frost of an eternal night is settling down upon their souls, and the Sun of Righteousness is hastening to set upon them for evermore. If then the plough of grace cannot force its way into your ice-bound heart to-day, what likelihood is there that it will enter in to-morrow?

M'Cheyne.

Blots.

He that cleanses a blot with blurred figures, makes a greater blot. Before thou reprehend another take heed thou art not culpable in what thou goest about to reprehend. Even the candle-snuffers of the sanctuary were of pure gold. (Ex. xxxvii. 23).

Quarles.

Rain-Drops.

I see many drops make a shower: and what difference is it whether I be wet either in the rain or in the river, if both be to the skin?

Therefore as I am fearful to act great sins, so I will be careful to avoid small ones. He that contemns a small fault commits a great one. There is small benefit in the choice, whether we go down to hell by degrees or at once.

Warwick.

NOTES OF A LESSON ON SIN.

The Author of Sin—The Devil, 1 John iii. 8; Gen. iii. 13.

Its entrance into the world; Gen. iii. 6; Rom. v. 12.

The Nature of Sin:—Sin is the transgression of the Law, 1 John iii. 4.

Sins of Commission will embrace—

1st. Sins of the heart, Gen. viii. 21; Matt. xv. 19; Prov. xxiv. 9, 1st clause. Illustration—The Scribes, Matt. xxiii. 3. 4.

2nd. Of the Tongue:—

Swearing, Ex. xx. 7; St. Matt. v. 34—39; James v. 12.

Lying, Prov. xii. 22; Col. iii. 9.

Idle and Sinful Words, St. Matt. xii. 36, 37; Ephes. iv. 29, 31; v. 4.

3rd. Of the Life:—

Sabbath-breaking, Ex. xx. 8—10; Lev. xix. 30. Illustration—the Man gathering sticks, Numb. xv. 32—36.

Stealing, Ex. xx. 15; Ephes. iv. 28.

Disobedience to Parents, Ex. xx. 12; Ephes. vi. 1—3.

Sins of Omission:—

1st. Neglect of known duties, St. Luke xii. 47.

2nd. The non-improvement of Opportunities and Talents. Illustration—the Parable of the Talents, St. Matt. xxv. 14—30.

The Universality of Sin, Rom. iii. 23; Eccles. vii. 20; Isa. lxiv. 6.

The Consequences of Sin:—

The loss of God's Image, Gen. vi. 12; John iii. 6.

Estrangement from God, Gen. iii. 8; Rom. i. 28, 30; Rom. viii. 7.

Sickness and Sorrow, Gen. iii. 17—19; Job. xiv. 1; v. 7.

Death, Temporal and Eternal, Rom. v. 12; vi. 23, 1st Clause. James i. 15; Matt. xiii. 41, 42; St. Matt. xxv. 41.

Man's utter inability to save himself, Jer. xiii. 23; Rom. iii. 19, 20. Illustration, the Leprosy, see Lev. xiii., xiv.

The Remedy provided by God in the Gospel:—

Pardon, John iii. 16; Acts xxvi. 18; Ephes. i. 7; 1 John i. 7.

Reconciliation, Rom. v. 1, 10; Ephes. ii. 16; Col. i. 20—22.

Adoption, Rom. viii. 14—16; 1 John iii. 1, 2; St. John i. 12; Ephes. i. 5.

Restoration to God's Image, Rom. viii. 29; Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27; Ephes. v. 27; Col. iii. 10.

Eternal Life, St. Matt. xxv. 34; St. John x. 28; xiv. 2, 3.

Application:—

Endeavour to make each child see his lost and ruined state by nature and by practice, that they all may seek the remedy provided; and remind them of the promises contained in St. Luke xi. 13; St. John vi. 37.

E. M.

LESSONS ON THE LITURGY, FOR BIBLE CLASSES.

ALTHOUGH there is, and may continue to be much diversity of opinion as to the age at which Sunday school children should be taken to Church, it will, at least, be conceded by all parties, that those who habitually attend Divine worship, and especially the senior scholars, should be assisted in gaining a right understanding and a due appreciation of our very excellent and beautiful Liturgy, so that their worship may not be mere lip-service, but a heartfelt pouring forth of prayer and praise.

But however generally the desirableness of this may be agreed on, we do not hesitate to say that the practice of it is lamentably neglected. Assuming it (as we do without hesitation) to be one of the duties of the Sunday school teacher to instruct his charge in the use and improvement of the Church Service, we cannot but fear that it is a duty almost entirely overlooked. Being accustomed from our earliest childhood to those hallowed and time-honoured forms—to the mingled supplications and thanksgivings which many have declared to be all but inspired,—we forget that they need any explanation. The well-known words fall softly on our ears, and kindle many a thought of sorrow and of joy, and we forget that where the language or the phraseology is but imperfectly understood, the effect must in a proportionate degree be lost.

We by no means intend to imply that the language of our Liturgy is frequently difficult, or its grammatical construction much involved. On the contrary, taken as a whole we think it conspicuous for simplicity. Yet must it be allowed that there are many things in it which need explanation to a child; and if our readers will only take the Introductory Exhortation, or the Confession, or the Absolution, and catechise their class on the construction and meaning of it, we feel sure that the result of the experiment will be the conviction that a study of the Liturgy is an important part of their duties as Sunday school teachers.

Nor is such a step necessary merely for the individual parts. It is not enough that our scholars should understand each portion in its isolated position—they ought also to be possessed of some perception of the relative position of the various parts of the Service, and of the admirable manner in which prayer, praise, the confession of faith, and the reading of the Scriptures are interwoven.

It is especially desirable that our Bible Classes should be led to examine and study the forms of prayer in which we desire them to take part, as intelligent members of the Church of England. They have become, we trust, acquainted with and interested in religious

truths, and exercises of devotion: and it is of importance that the worship in which they are invited by us to join from Sabbath to Sabbath should not be a lifeless form, but a spiritual reality, by which they may draw near to God with the understanding as well as with the heart.

The course of Lessons which we propose for these classes especially (but which need not be confined to them), will teach them that the Liturgy of the Church of England is based upon the Word of God, and will enable them to apply the truths of Scripture to the explanation of many things in their Sabbath prayers which have hitherto been devoid of significance to them. We commence the Series with some preliminary Lessons on the duty, privilege, and nature of public worship, and on the use of forms of prayer, that the great solemnity of such services may be felt, and an answer given to the objections urged against the use of a Liturgy.

The scholars should be provided with Prayer Books, as well as Bibles; and, individually, required to find and read the references given to the Scriptures in the Lessons.

LESSON I.

ON PUBLIC WORSHIP.

Before we examine the Form of Public Worship prescribed by our own Church, let us first notice, generally, the duty, privilege, and nature of Public Worship in general; and this we can do by enquiring.

I. WHAT DOES MAN OWE TO GOD? Man ought to *fear* God, for He is great in Power, Ps. cxlvii. 5; in Glory, 1 Tim. vi. 16; in Judgment, Gen. xviii. 25; in Providence, Psalm xcii. 5; Job xxxviii.; while man, on the contrary is weak, Job iv. 19; perishing, James iv. 14; ignorant, Job xi. 7; and sinful, Ps. xiv. 1. See intances of this fear in Adam, Gen. iii. 8; Moses, Ex. iii. 6; Isaiah, vi. 5; Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 13; Job xl. 4, 5.

Man should *praise* God; for He made everything good, Gen. i. 31; He sustains all men by the gifts of his Providence, Ps. cxlv. 15; and He nourishes all the animal creation, Ps. cxlvii. 9; caring even for the sparrows, Luke xii. 6.

See examples of this praise:—1 Chron. xvi. 36; xxix. 13; Ps. cviii. 1; Ezra iii. 11; 2 Sam. xxii. 50; Acts xvi. 25.

Man ought to *love* God, for He is merciful; for, whereas man has grievously offended Him, broken his commandments, and failed in acknowledging his glory, He is ready to forgive, Ezek. xviii. 23, 32; Is. i. 18; willing to save, Ps. cxlv. 19; Prov. xx. 22; and has given his own Son to die for man, John iii. 16.

II.—WHAT DOES MAN NEED OF GOD?

1.—The continual preservation of his body and mind:—as he did not create himself, Ps. c. 3, so neither can he sustain his own life, Ps. iii. 5; Jer. x. 23; it is short, easily destroyed, Job. iv. 19; Is. xl. 6; and often full of pain and disease, Job xxxiii. 19—22.

2. His mind was given him by God, and is, in many respects, a noble possession, raising him far above the animal creation, Ps. viii. 5—8; Eccles. iii. 21; and enabling him to search out many things, Eccles. i. 13; vii. 25. But that mind (or intellect) was God's gift, 2 Tim. i. 7; and the continued possession and right employment of it are through God's continued mercy, Ps. xciv. 10; Prov. ii. 5, 6; Job. xxvi. 22.

Besides, man's intellect is, after all, very limited in its sphere, and weak in its power, compared with the glorious truths about God, Job xi. 7, 8; Eternity, Heaven, 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10; or even nature, see Job xxxviii.; xxxix. So that man needs of God continual teaching. See the sense of this need, and the consequent supplications for such teaching, Ps. cxix. 12, &c.; Job xxxiv. 32; xlii. 3, 4.

3. His soul is God's gift, and Adam's soul was at first perfectly pure and upright Eccles. vii. 29; but he fell, and all his descendents with him, Gen. vi. 5; Rom v. 19; 1 John i. 10.

Therefore man needs of God, as regards his soul, Pardon, Luke xiii. 3; Righteousness, 1 Cor. vi. 9; Sanctification, John xvii. 17.

Thus he regains the image of God, Rom. viii. 29; 2 Cor. iii. 18; the favour of God, John xvi. 27; the peace of God, Eph. ii. 14; and will, at last, enter into the kingdom of God, John xiv. 2, 3; xvii. 24.

III.—How does God teach us to worship Him?

He alone will be worshipped. He will not accept a divided service, Matt. iv. 10. He says of Himself that He is jealous, Ex. xx. 5; and will not have the glory due to Him given to another, Is. xlii. 8.

He will be worshipped with reverence, Eccles. v. 1—3; Habak. ii. 20; Heb. xii. 28: not with the mere outward form alone, but with the heart, John iv. 24; Joshua xxiv. 14.

We must come to him with heartfelt repentance, and confession of sin, Jer. iii. 12—14; Hosea v. 15. To those who come thus, there are many glorious promises, Lev. xxvi. 40—42; Job. xxxiii. 27, 28; 1 John i. 9; Jer. xxxi. 18—20.

We must come with an earnest resolution (by God's help) to forsake sin, Job xxxiv. 31, 32; Eph. iv. 22; for if we secretly cling to our sins, our worship will be in vain, Ps. lxvi. 18; Prov. xv. 8, 29; but if we forsake them we shall find mercy, Is. i. 16—20.

Then as to the manner of worship—it is to be both public and private. Public, both under the old Dispensation, Ex. xxiii. 14—17, and the new, Matt. xviii. 20; Heb. x. 25; and private, Matt. vi. 6.

The attitude of prayer is not fixed. The Jews often stood to pray, Neh. ix. 2; a custom to which our Saviour alluded without reproof, Luke xviii. 11, 13; Mark xi. 25. Sometimes they sat, Judges xx. 26; 1 Chron. xvii. 16. But *kneeling* is usually looked on as *the posture of reverence*, see Ps. xcv. 6; 2 Chron. vi. 13; Dan. vi. 10; Acts ix. 40; xx. 36; xxi. 5.

God has provided a way whereby man may come to Him, which otherwise he would be unworthy to do, through the mediation of Christ Jesus, and, so coming, we shall be accepted, 1 John ii. 1; John xiv. 6. But we need the help of the Holy Spirit to enable us to pray aright, Rom. viii. 26.

LESSON II.

The difference between Private and Social Worship, and the respective advantages of each.

The object of this Lesson is not merely to point out the different features of Private and Public Worship, with the view of giving information alone, but, by directing attention to those differences, to lead to the desire and effort for the state of mind proper to each.

Recapitulate, very briefly, what man owes to God, and what he needs of God. All this is included in the term "worship," and that worship may be rendered to Him, either by one person alone, which is called private worship; or by many in company, which is called Social, if the number be small—Public, if it be large.

I.—What is Private Worship?

It is when man, alone, draws near to God, in prayer and praise.

It is God's ordinance that man should live in Society. Each of us has some duties to perform for some other person (compare Rom. xiv. 7), shewing clearly that God did not mean us to live alone. This is the spirit of Gen. ii. 18.

But man is apt to turn this good into evil, and live forgetful of his own eternal interests.

"We shall die alone;" "every one of us shall give account of *himself* to God," Rom. xiv. 12; so that we shall have to answer *alone* for our life and conduct. Nor can we save each other, Ps. xlix. 7: if we would be saved, that is a matter between each one of us and our God.

Therefore, whatever else we do, as in the public services of God's house, it is our plain duty to go to God alone.

The language of every individual should be, not merely, "*We* have sinned," but "*I* have sinned;" not merely, "Save *us*," but "Save *me*."

God distinguishes each one of us from the other. Each one of the great human race is as separate and distinct to Him as the planets around us are to our eyes; each one has his own peculiar sin and danger (Heb. xii. 1), each his own peculiar duties, each his own spiritual graces, 1 Cor. xii. 11.

He that can number and classify the stars of heaven (Is. xl. 26), will not overlook a single one of the human race.

We have an express command for this duty of private prayer, see Matt. vi. 6. And we have examples of it, see Gen. xxxii. 24; 2 Sam. vii. 18; and above all our Saviour's, Matt. xiv. 23; Luke ix. 18.

What, then, is the great essential of private worship? The feeling of standing before God with his eye on *us*; and the realizing our own individual sins, dangers, duties, and necessities.

II.—What is Public Worship? The gathering of many, to seek and serve Him who is their common Father.

When worshippers join thus together, in what respects are they all alike? "All have sinned;" "all we like sheep have gone astray;" they "are all the work of his hands," Job xxxiv. 19; all preserved by Him, Neh. ix. 6; all doomed to death, Heb. ix. 27; all called to repentance and salvation, Acts ii. 38, 39.

Also, true worshippers are bound to care for one another, 1 Cor. xii. 25; to pray for one another, Jas. v. 16; to give thanks for one another, 2 Thess. i. 3; to sympathise with each other's griefs or joys, Rom. xii. 10, 15; and to watch

over one another, Heb. iii. 13. And why? Because they are brethren, Matt. xxiii. 8.

The advantage of private worship is, that we can make more particular confession of our sins, and seek for those especial mercies which we need.

The advantage of public worship is, that we animate one another, Ps. cxxii. 1, and learn more and more the meaning of the words, "the communion of saints," Ps. cxxii. 3, 8.

The spirit of private worship should be (mainly), "What must *I* do to be saved?" The spirit of public worship adds to that, "We beseech Thee graciously to behold *this thy family*," &c.

LESSON III.

Public Worship under the Old Testament, and under the New.

The worship of God by individual believers, their prayers and praises are recorded all through the narratives of Scripture. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, &c., are frequently set before us in their private communion with God.

But what are we told of social or public worship?

Take, I.—The Patriarchal Dispensation.

There was then no stated ministry; each Patriarch was the spiritual as well as temporal head of his family. Population was less dense; men were not collected in such large numbers, and besides, the history of those times is told us very briefly. Much is omitted which might have been interesting, but which it was quite unnecessary that we should know.

Take the case of Jacob, surrounded by idolaters. His social worship would therefore be confined to the members of his own family. See the instances of his associating them with him in religious worship, Gen. xxxi. 54; xxxv. 2—4.

II.—The Mosaic Dispensation.

The principle of social and public worship was at the very foundation of this.

There are numerous cases in which men were to come by themselves, for their own individual spiritual needs, see Lev. i. 2; iv. 3; v. 15, &c.; but the temple was pre-eminently a place for public worship, Ps. cxxii. 4.

1st. There was the morning and evening sacrifice, and the burning of incense; and we learn from Luke i. 10 that the *people* then gathered together for prayer.

2nd. There were their solemn days of festivals and fasts, when the whole congregation (a term with them inclusive of the whole nation), were to meet. Express orders were given that all the males should assemble three times a year in the temple, Ex. xxiii. 17; at such times they were to observe the precepts in Deut. xxi. 11—13, &c.

3rd. We find traces of similar gatherings on extraordinary occasions. See Num. xxvii. 19; Joshua viii. 35; Judges xx. 1, 2; 1 Kings viii. 14; 2 Chron. xiii. 3; xxix. 28; Ezra x. 1, 5, 9; iii. 1; Neh. v. 13; viii. 1, 2, 5, 17, &c.

III.—The Gospel Dispensation.

There is abundant provision here for private prayer; see previous Lesson, and Matt. vi. 6, &c.; but the great principle of Christian brotherhood is displayed in the stress laid on social and public worship. Our Saviour set the example of being constant in his attendance at the temple.

Notice 1st, that there is an express promise for such, Matt. xviii. 20.

2nd, that when our Saviour would teach his disciples to pray, He taught them to say, "*Our* Father," &c.

What do we find to have been the practice of the early disciples? Constant exercise in social and public worship. Compare Acts i. 14; ii. 1, 46; iv. 24; xii. 5, 12; xiii. 1, 3.

Notice, lastly, the express injunction, Heb. x. 25.

LESSON IV.

A Form of Prayer, Scriptural and Advantageous.

What is meant by a Form of Prayer? It means when the very words to be used (whether for prayer or thanksgiving), are appointed.

It is not urged that private prayer should be of this nature; for one of the essential advantages of private prayer is that in it we may mention the particular circumstances of each day—the particular sins we may have committed—the particular dangers to which we may be exposed—the particular help or mercy which we need. The course of our life brings many *fresh things* before us, and we ought to frame our private prayers according to each day's circumstances.

Also, if we always pray after a set form, we may come at last to repeat the words mechanically; that is, without thinking what we are saying. Therefore, although young children must have words taught them at first, yet they should be encouraged and assisted soon to pray in their own words.

But with public worship the case is different, as we shall see.

I.—The advantages of a Form of Prayer in Public Worship.

The dangers to which we are most exposed, when we are engaged in prayer, are

Wandering thoughts (Eccles v. 1—7).

Asking amiss; either asking what we ought not, or asking in an improper way (James iv. 3).

Needless repetition (Matt. vi. 7); and

Omitting, through forgetfulness, much that we ought to ask for (Ps. lxxxi. 10).

Moreover, there is another danger when one person alone prays extempore (*i.e.*, according to what may occur to him at the time), for if it happen that through sin, or infirmity, or unbelief, his prayers are cold and lifeless, all the congregation suffer by it, and a precious opportunity is well-nigh lost.

How does our form of prayer meet these dangers?

1st. It tends to prevent wandering thoughts by offering the Book of Prayer; for wandering *eyes* lead to wandering thoughts. The evil is not always prevented by this, for it is quite possible to follow the minister with our eyes and our voice, whilst yet the thoughts wander; but the danger is *much less* when the eyes are kept from wandering.

2nd. It prevents needless repetition; it avoids hasty and rash petitions; and it comprehends all that is needful, *because* it has been drawn up at leisure, carefully, and deliberately, by good, and holy, and wise men, who felt the importance of their work, and looked and prayed for Divine assistance in it.

3rd. By giving the minister the very words he shall use, it enables the congregation at all times to join in the worship with spirit and earnestness, without being dependent on him, and without any feeling of uncertainty and curiosity as to what he may be about to say.

(Note—The minister prays *with* the people, not *for* them; he confesses his sins in the same form that they do, and offers supplication and thanksgiving with them, or as their representative. On the other hand, as an ambassador for Christ, he declares to them God's forgiveness of sin; he administers the sacraments; he reads and preaches the Word of God).

Therefore, we conclude that the use of a form of prayer in public worship has many and great advantages.

II.—Has it Scriptural authority?

Scripture contains no direct precepts for our guidance under the Gospel dispensation; but as we have seen that a form of prayer is very useful, and as their is no injunction *against* it, we do right to employ one. But, whilst there is no express command to use one now, we find traces of the use of a form in many instances, both under the old and new dispensations.

First.—In the old dispensation.

See Exodus xv., where Moses and the children of Israel united in singing a song of triumphant thanksgiving to God, for the salvation of the people by the destruction of Pharaoh.

See also Judges v., the song of Deborah *and* Barak.

In these cases a form seems to have been composed for the occasion, as we cannot think that otherwise two or more parties could have joined in the words recorded.

Compare also the prescribed form for blessing the people, Num. vi. 22—27. Also the form of blessing and cursing, to be used periodically on Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, Deut. xxvii. 11—26.

See also Num. x. 35, 36, and Hosea xiv. 2.

Secondly, under the Gospel dispensation.

We find a similar occurrence to the above in Acts iv. 24—30.

We find St. Paul alluding to a form of sound words, which he had taught Timothy, 2 Tim. i. 13. Not prayer, we suppose, but still shewing that he recognised the principle of committing religious truth to the keeping of a form of words.

Lastly and chiefly.—We find our Saviour teaching his Apostles a form of prayer, ever since called by his name—the Lord's prayer. See Matt. vi. 9—13, and Luke xi. 1—4. On the first of these occasions the disciples were directed to pray "after this manner;" on the second, to use the very words, "When ye pray, say, Our Father," &c. Thus the Lord's prayer is to be made a model for prayer, and also to be used as a form of prayer. Therefore, we conclude that Scripture justifies us in the use of a form of prayer.

LESSON V.

A General view of the Contents of the Prayer Book.

Our previous Lessons have had reference to the nature, design, advantages, and sanctions of pubic worship in a form. The next step is to take the Prayer Book, and analyze its contents; showing how admirably it is fitted to answer the purpose so described.

It would be well for the teacher to give a very brief account of the compilation of the Book of Common Prayer, as it now stands. But we do not feel it necessary to enter on that subject here, as it has been frequently treated of late, in

periodicals and books; and in particular, in our own Teachers' Monthly Magazine for 1860. We, therefore, pass on to the next step, which we recommend should be a rapid survey of the contents of the Prayer Book, preparatory to a detailed examination of each part. Thus our scholars will be prepared for what they will meet with; and will also gain a comprehensive idea of the various necessities of a congregation, and the (consequently) varied Services in which they seek or acknowledge the mercies of God.

What does the Prayer Book contain? This is our present Lesson.

First refer to what we have already seen to be the parts of public worship, viz:—prayer—praise—preaching. Add to these the administration (at proper times) of the Sacraments—Baptism and the Lord's Supper, of which we shall speak bye and bye.

Of these, preaching must be left to the minister; both because no book could contain sermons in sufficient number and variety to serve for perpetual preaching; and because it is the solemn office of the minister to study and to preach the Word of God for himself.

But the Church has set forth (*i.e.*, published with authority) a collection of homilies, or sermons, which serve as lasting records of her doctrines, as models of sermons, and as an assistance to young clergymen in preaching.

Prayer, praise, and forms for administering the Sacraments, we find in the Prayer Book; and, in addition, we find provision for the *reading* of the Scriptures, as an important part of public worship. By this, the Church shews her deep reverence for the Word of God, and provides a large portion of infallible truth for the instruction of the congregation.

The Prayer Book contains,

I.—The preface.

II.—An address concerning the service of the Church.

III.—An address concerning ceremonies.

These may well form part of the instruction of a senior class; reference being made to the fact, that the Service of the Romish Church had been overloaded with ceremonies, some even absurd ones, which the compilers of this book simplified, whilst they also cut off several other abuses, as the reading of the Service in a foreign tongue—irregular readings in the Scripture—improper *differences* in the performance of the Service, &c.

IV.—Directions concerning the reading of the Psalter, or Book of Psalms.

V.—Directions about the reading of the rest of the Holy Scripture.

(These two might be read aloud—they will explain themselves; and they shew the opinion of the compilers of the Prayer Book, as to the regular and systematic reading of the Scriptures).

VI.—Tables shewing the Proper Lessons and Proper Psalms (*i.e.*, Lessons and Psalms peculiarly appropriate) for each Sunday and Holy Day; and Tables of Lessons for each day of the month not distinguished by any particular character.

VII.—Tables for fixing the dates of the various Holy days sanctioned by the Church. (These would give rise to a brief remark on the lawfulness and advantages of keeping certain days in commemoration of solemn events; a subject, however, which will be treated more at length afterwards).

VIII.—The Morning Prayer.

IX.—The Evening Prayer.

X.—The Athanasian Creed, for use on certain days.

XI.—The Litany, a part of the Morning Prayer, on all but a few excepted days.

XII.—Various special Prayers and Thanksgivings, to be used in the course of the Morning or Evening Service, as circumstances require.

XIII.—The Collect, Epistle and Gospel for each Sunday in the year. The former is generally (and once was strictly) a *collection* of some of the prominent truths contained in the two latter.

XIV.—The form for the administration of the Holy Communion.

XV.—The forms for the Public Paptism of Infants; for their private Baptism (in cases of necessity) in Houses; and for the Baptism of Adults.

XVI.—The Church Catechism, a summary of Christian faith and practice, to be learnt of every person before he can be confirmed and partake of the Lord's Supper.

XVII.—The Order of Confirmation, when young persons openly and solemnly take on themselves the vows already made for them by their sponsors.

After this follow other special services, of which it will be needful only to particularize those for the Visitation of the Sick, and the Burial of the Dead. Also the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church, her authoritative declaration of doctrines to be held by all her members. Then the forms for Ordination of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons (in reference to which a remark should be made on the obvious advantages and Scriptural sanction for setting apart a distinct body of men for the sacred ministry); and lastly, the Psalms in Metre, arranged for singing; an important part of the public worship of God.

The practical application of this Lesson may be—The various wants and necessities of man, the privilege of bringing them all before our heavenly Father, and the privilege of possessing such a comprehensive Liturgy.

LESSON VI.

The Opening Sentences and Exhortation.

In commencing this Lesson, it will be well to point out the spirit in which we ought to come before God in public worship, with what reverence we should approach his throne, and with what heartfelt humility and penitence we should enter into his presence; and then to ask, What influence would these feelings have on us as regards attendance at Church? They would make us regular, punctual, and attentive, and lead us to look on the Service not only as a duty to be performed, but as a privilege to be enjoyed. Is it so with us?

The congregation being gathered, and in their places, quiet and attentive, and having (as ought to be the case) privately prayed that God would dispose them to seek Him and would accept their worship, the clergyman begins the Service. He wears a white surplice, as a distinction, and as an emblem of that purity of heart which all should possess who serve God, Matt. v. 8; 1 Tim. ii. 8; Heb. xii. 14. He stands so that he may be seen by as many as possible; and speaks in a loud clear voice, so that all may hear, and join him in the service.

I.—The **opening sentences** were added on the revision of the Prayer Book, the Service at first appointed having commenced with the Lord's Prayer, which was felt to be too abrupt, and that these sentences from the Divine Word would tend to create that preparedness of heart and mind so necessary to devout prayer. They are all taken from Scripture, and all relate to the first thing which we should feel and acknowledge, when we draw near to God, namely, our sinfulness. Let us look at each in order.

The 1st is an assurance that, sinners as we are, there is mercy for us if we truly repent.

The 2nd is a confession by David.

The 3rd is one of his prayers. He prays that God would forget his sins, and blot them out (which the blood of Jesus can do, 1 John i. 7).

The 4th describes the spirit in which we should come to God; the kind of offering which He accepts, that is, a broken heart (contrite also means broken), broken on account of guilt. Wicked men may despise one who mourns for having sinned, but God does not despise him— He loves such a sacrifice, Matt. v. 4.

The 5th is an exhortation, and an assurance. To rend the garment was an eastern sign of grief—to rend the heart means to suffer deep and heartfelt grief.

The 6th is the language of trust. Sinners as we are, God is full of mercy.

The 7th is a prayer that we may experience God's chastenings, which are all for our good, and signs of his love (Prov. iii. 11, 12), and not the judgments of his wrath, which end in utter destruction.

The 8th is a call to repentance—the burden of John the Baptist's preaching, and the first proclamation of our Saviour in his ministry.

The 9th is the confession of the prodigal son, returning to his father, and ought to be the expression of our own feelings towards our heavenly Father.

The 10th is an acknowledgement of our utter unworthiness before God, and that no man can stand blameless before Him.

The last speaks of men deceiving themselves with the false idea of their being perfect and sinless, and points out that confession is the first step to forgiveness.

In THE EXHORTATION which follows this recognition by the Church of Scripture and its promises, as the only foundation and basis of her teaching, the minister first reminds the people that Scripture in sundry (many different) places calls on them to acknowledge their sinfulness, without attempting to dissemble or cloke (hide) them from God. Compare Numbers v. 7; Prov. xxviii. 13; Ezra x. 11; Jerem. iii. 13; Ezek. xiv. 6; Hosea v. 15.

Then he reminds them that such a confession is especially required at times of public worship, the other purposes of which he also enumerates, as—thanksgiving, praise, hearing of the Scriptures, and prayer for temporal and spiritual mercies. See 2 Chron. vii. 14; Neh. ix. 1, 2; Hosea xiv. 2; Joel i. 14; Heb. x. 25.

Similar public confessions of sin were enjoined with peculiar solemnity under the law. The great day of atonement, when the high priest declared in a threefold confession his own sins, the sins of his family, and of the public in general, was the most solemn of all the religious services of the Jews.

Then he calls on them to unite with him in an open confession, with a heart free from the love of sin, and with a "humble" (subdued) tone. See Ps. xxiv. 4; lxvi. 18; 1 Tim. ii. 8.

We are also thus reminded—

1.—That we ought all to feel ourselves to be sinners, and to acknowledge it.

2—That it is in vain to attempt to conceal our sins from God, Ps. xc. 8.

3.—That confession is an essential part of Divine worship, and that whenever we ask for mercies it ought to be with the feeling that we do not deserve them. Compare Gen. xxxii. 10.

4.—That God requires a thorough renunciation of sin, Is. i. 16, 17; and *also* the outward signs of that holy reverence with which we should approach Him.

LESSON VII.

THE CONFESSION.

The Rubric (so called because originally printed in *red letters*), or direction preceding the General Confession, orders it to be said "by the whole congregation after the minister," all kneeling, for all are to join in it, see Eccles. vii. 20, including the minister; and we should each with own own lips take part in this acknowledgment of our sinfulness, and our position should be that which most significantly pourtrays humility.

What are its statements?

1.—The address. God is able and willing to save, and we address Him as Almighty and most merciful. Also He is like a Father to his people: therefore we will call Him such, Ps. ciii. 13; 2 Cor. vi. 18.

2.—We speak of ourselves as having erred and strayed, that is wandered: we have left the path that God would have us walk in, like sheep that have lost their way by heedlessness.

What is the right path? The way of God's commandments; it is the way of life, Prov. xii. 28; it is clearly marked out, Isaiah xxx. 21; it is a narrow and difficult path, Matt. vii. 14; therefore we should use David's prayer, Ps. cxix. 35; xvii. 5.

To wander from that way is to forsake God for other things, as Israel did, Isaiah i. 4 (and that wilfully, Jer. vi. 16); as David did, Ps. cxix. 176; and Demas, 2 Tim. iv. 10; and other professing disciples, spoken of by St. Peter, 2 Peter. ii. 15. And note that some of these never found the right way again.

We have *all* wandered, see Isaiah liii. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 25.

3.—We acknowledge that we have followed our own ways, instead of God's ways (devices, purposes, inclinations).

Man's natural way is an evil one, Gen. viii. 21; its end is death, Isaiah lxvi. 3 (last clause) and 4.

4.—We confess to have broken God's law in two ways,—By not doing his will and by doing what is contrary to his will. But He requires a full and a perfect obedience at all times, and in all things, Deut. vi. 6, 7; Matt. vi. 24; James ii. 10. As illustrations of leaving things undone that ought to be done, see Matt. xxiii. 23; xxv. 43—45.

5.—We describe ourselves as having no health in us. Sin is like sickness, weakening, and, if uncured, destroying us. And naturally we are in that state, as God says of Israel, Jer. iv. 22, and still more strongly in Is. i. 4—6.

6.—We plead for mercy; miserable without it. Those who brave out God's warning are only putting off and heaping up their misery, Job xv. 23.

7.—We describe ourselves as confessing, and as penitent, and ask that God would spare us, that is would not punish us as we deserve; and would restore us that is, take us back into his favour, and lead us in the right way. Compare Ps. xxxix. 13; Joel. ii. 17.

8.—We humbly remind God of his gracious promises in (that is, through) Jesus Christ. See an encouragement so to remind Him in Is. lxii. 7.

What are those promises?

To spare, Ps. lxxii. 13; Is. lvii. 16; Mal. iii. 17.

And to restore, Is. lvii. 18; Jer. xxx. 17.

Compare David's happy experience, Ps. xxiii. 3; and ciii. 10—12; see also Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Ephes. i. 7; Rev. xxii. 17.

9.—We pray also, that for the sake, and through the merits of the same Saviour, God would enable us to live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to his own glory.

God alone can enable us to do this; any good in us is the work of his Holy Spirit, Gal. v. 22, 23.

A godly life is a life of holiness, following God, as in Ephes. v. 1; 1 Thes. i. 6.

A righteous life is one of integrity and uprightness, Acts xxiv. 16.

A sober life is one not filled with worldly vanities, nor occupied with worldly pleasures, but wisely looking forward to, and preparing for the life to come, 1 Thes. v. 6, 8; 1 Pet. i. 13; 1 Cor. vii. 31.

So we ought to live, Titus ii. 12; and so living we glorify God; that is, God is honoured and praised for his grace in us. Compare Is. xliv. 23; John xv. 8; Gal. i. 24.

One point should especially be urged, in connection with the whole confession.—That whilst we join with all the congregation in it, we should each one of us remember, confess, and seek forgiveness for our own individual sins. For though the terms of the confession are general, so that all may use them, yet they are so particular, that in uttering them, each one of us may at the same time mentally unfold the plague of his own heart, his particular sins, as effectually as if he enumerated them in detail. We alone on earth know what they all are, but we cannot hide one from God.

LESSON VIII.

The Absolution.

The Minister and Congregation having all made confession of their sins, as we saw in our last Lesson, the Service next sets forth the Absolution.

To absolve, means to unloose or set free, a person from something binding on them, and from which they cannot set themselves free. So a king may absolve his subjects from their allegiance to him; and he may absolve them from punishment when they have made themselves liable to it by breaking the laws.

God is our King, Is. xxxiii. 22; we have made ourselves liable to punishment, Rom. v. 12, and we cannot deliver ourselves, Rom. v. 6. All this we have just confessed. But is there then no hope for us?

There is. The minister stands up, whilst we still kneel, and DECLARES God's mercy. Ministers are "ambassadors for Christ," 2 Cor. v. 20; they bring messages of mercy from Him, which He, in his Word, gives them authority to do; see his commission to the Apostles, Matt. xxviii. 19.

Let us see then what the Minister declares, in the name of Jesus our Redeemer:—(observe that it is not a prayer, addressed to God, but a declaration, addressed to the people.)

I.—He reminds us that God, the Almighty, is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, that God is able to save us, because He is Almighty; and that He has shown his willingness to save us, by sending his Son Jesus Christ to die—read Rom. viii. 32; and John iii. 16.

II.—He tells us that God desires the repentance and salvation of man, and not his destruction. In this he repeats God's own words—read Ezek. xviii. 31, 32; xxxiii. 11; Lament. iii. 33; 2 Peter iii. 9.

But, notice that the sinner's turning from his wickedness is the *first* thing. Unless he turns he cannot live, Rom. viii. 13.

That life means the life of the soul, as in Ps. xvi. 11.

III.—He tells us that God has given his Ministers power and commandment, &c.

To declare and pronounce, mean to say a thing thoughtfully and solemnly—read Jer. xxxvi. 7; Eccles. ix. 1; and when we do so for another person, the words imply that we have his authority—read Jer. xxxvi. 18.

What have the Ministers of God authority to say?

That if we are penitent, and unfeignedly (without deceit, and heartily) believe his holy Gospel, God will absolve us from our sins, and remit the just punishment of them.

Note the two things required:—

1st.—Repentance; as our Saviour declares, Mark i. 15; Luke xiii. 3.

2nd.—Faith, unfeigned, 1 Tim. i. 5; 2 Tim. i. 5; believing the holy Gospel, *i. e.* faith in Christ, on which the whole Gospel depends, John i. 12; Heb. xi. 6.

Does God promise to forgive those who repent and believe? Yes, through Christ, Acts v. 31; read, 2 Chron. vii. 14; Hosea xiv. 4; Jer. xxxiii. 8; l. 20. And there are numberless passages in which God's servants repeat this glorious truth; as Acts ii. 38; x. 43; Rom. iii. 25; &c.

Has God authorized his Ministers to declare this? See Christ's commission, Luke xxiv. 47. And read 1 Cor. iii. 5; iv. 1; 2 Cor. iii. 6; v. 18; vi. 4; as shewing the work of the ministry.

After this, the Minister exhorts the congregation to pray for two things:—Repentance, which is God's gift, Acts v. 31; and the Holy Spirit, which, also, He has promised, Joel. ii. 28, 29. From these gifts of God come three good things:—

1st.—"Those things which we do at this present,"—that is, our prayers, praises, and service, will "please Him,"—will be accepted by Him, for Christ's sake, Ephes. i. 6. 2nd.—We shall live a pure and holy life; and 3rd.—We shall come at last to the eternal joys which God has prepared for them that love Him, Ps. xvi. 11.

LESSON IX.

The Lord's Prayer.

We have now had—Exhortation, Confession, and Absolution. But the best prayers a man can compose will be imperfect, leaving out something which ought to be mentioned. Is there no *perfect* form of prayer?

There is. Read Luke xi. 1, and you will see who gave us a form of prayer, which, because *He* gave it, we call "the Lord's Prayer." The Church Service originally commenced with this prayer; but the solemnity attaching to the use of words taught by Christ himself, and the mode in which God is addressed in them, combine to render it desirable that we should not employ these holy words until we have prepared our hearts by a sincere repentance. We use it in this part of our Service, because it sums up all the things we have been saying. And it is used again and again, as a kind of finish or close, to different parts of the Service; not so often as to become a "vain repetition," but often enough to shew the high value placed on it by the compilers of the Liturgy.

Note, that in one of the Gospels we are told to pray in the very words of the prayer, Luke xi. 2; in another, to pray "after this manner;" Matt. vi. 9.

From this we gather that the prayer was given to us both as a form to be itself used, and as a model by which to compose our own prayers.

Let us now examine the first four clauses or divisions.

I.—"Our Father which art in Heaven."

II.—"Hallowed be thy Name."

III.—"Thy kingdom come."

IV.—"Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven."

I. The Address, or Invocation. We say of God that He is our Father, and that He is in heaven.

Why do we call God our Father? Because He is, to us, all that an earthly Father is to his children; and that in an infinitely higher degree, for what does a father do for his children? He feeds them; protects them; educates or teaches them (either himself, or procuring that education from others.)

Does God so care for us? He feeds us, *i. e.* supplies our earthly wants. He does this for all men, Ps. civ. 27; cxlv. 16, but especially for his own people, Ps. xxxvii. 25; Matt. vi. 25—33. He protects us, Ps. xci; Prov. xviii. 10; xxix. 25; 1 Pet. iii. 13. See David's confidence, Ps. xxiii. He teaches us (Job xxxvi. 22), and that in several ways: by his Word, 2 Tim. iii. 16; by his Ministers, Deut. iv. 14; Ephes. iv. 11; by his providences, Ps. xc. 12; Hosea v. 15; Jonah ii. 2; by his Spirit, John xiv. 26; 1 John ii. 27.

Next—Why do we say that God is in heaven? He is everywhere, Ps. cxxxix; Jer. xxiii. 24; 1 Kings viii. 27. But God's especial presence and *some* manifestations of his glory, constitute what is here called heaven. See such passages as Is. vi. and Rev. iv. Read also Matt. xviii. 10; Mark xvi. 19; Acts. vii. 55; Heb. ix. 24, and many others.

To call God our Father is a glorious privilege, and should fill our hearts with thankfulness, Gal. iv. 6. To speak of Him as *in Heaven*, should remind us of his Majesty, and fill us with reverence, Eccles. v. 2.

II.—"Hallowed be thy name." To hallow anything is to count it holy, and to treat it as if it were so. See this as regards the Sabbath, Jer. xvii. 22; the temple, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14; the priests, Ex. xxix. 21, &c. To hallow the name of God is to speak that great Name with reverence and godly fear. So in Deut. xxviii. 58; Ps. xcix. 3; Mal. i. 11, 14; Rev. xv. 4; as contrasted with Lev. xix. 12; Is. lii. 5; Jer. xxiii. 10. We hallow the name of God when we give Him the honour and glory due to Him as the Creator, and the Providence which rules the world, and as the Redeemer and Sanctifier of mankind; and when we exalt Him in our thoughts and affections, words and actions, above all creatures, 1 Cor. x. 31.

III.—"Thy kingdom come." God is already King; but all do not acknowledge his kingdom, see Job. xxi. 14; Ps. ii. 1—3. The time will come when all such opposition will cease, and all men truly serve God, Dan. ii. 39; Is. xi. 9; Zech. xiv. 9; Rev. xi. 15. We pray, then, for this glorious time to come, and for the conversion of the world that sinners condemned as rebels against God may, by Christ's mediation, be restored to their subjection and to his blessing, Col. i. 13, 14.

IV.—"Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven."

Who dwell in heaven? The angels, pure, holy, obedient. See their employment, Gen. xxviii. 12; Heb. i. 14. There is no disobedience there, but there is much on earth; there are multitudes here who only follow their own ways. Indeed, *all* do this, until the grace of God touches their hearts, and makes them obedient. See Is. liii. 6; Ps. xiv. 1—3; contrasted with 1 Pet. i. 2; 2 Cor. x. 5.

What will the world be, when these glorious things come to pass?

LESSON X.

THE LORD'S PRAYER, CONTINUED.

The petitions we have been considering in the former Lesson, related to the glory of God and the advance of His kingdom, the four following ones concern our own necessities alike of body and soul, the order observed being in agreement with our Lord's teaching, Matt. vi. 33.

V.—"Give us this day our daily bread."

VI.—"And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us."

VII.—"And lead us not into temptation."

VIII.—"But deliver us from evil."

V.—"Give us, &c." What do we mean by daily bread? That which we need day by day. We may ask for *that;* we may not ask for wealth. Riches are a burden and temptation (though they be made very useful to others, 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18), and God would have us seek only moderate supplies of earthly treasure; see Prov. xxiii. 4; xxviii. 20; 1 Tim. vi. 9; and Agur's prayer, Prov. xxx. 8, 9. See the precepts in Matt. vi. 19—31—33; 1 Tim. vi. 8. We know not "what shall be on the morrow;" but if God is our friend we shall have enough, Ps. xxxvii. 25.

VI.—"And forgive us, &c." That we forgive others is no *claim* to God's mercy; that would be making atonement for ourselves, which we cannot do. But these words are intended to remind us that God has no forgiveness for those who have none for their fellow-men. This is strikingly taught us in the parable of the unmerciful servant, Matt. xviii. 21—35; See also Matt. vi. 15; and Jas. ii. 13. And why so? Because where revenge is nourished, there can be no love; and where there is no love, there is no true religion; see 1 John ii. 9, 11; iii. 10, 14, 15; iv. 8, 20.

VII.—"And lead us not into temptation." God never tempts man in the sense in which Satan does—that of *wishing* him to do wrong, James i. 13. But He sometimes permits men to be tempted, that they may learn their own helplessness, and lean on Him. So with Peter, Luke xxii. 31, 32. We pray, then, that He would not lead us into temptation beyond our strength, nor leave us without His own help. And this is promised us, 1 Cor. x. 13; 2 Peter ii. 9.

VIII.—"But deliver us from evil." Who can say how much evil there is in the world? how much in our own hearts? From all this God can and will deliver us—from an evil heart—from evil men—from evil spirits—from an evil world—from pain and sickness—from death. See David's confidence, Ps. lvi. 13; and the glorious fulfilment to all the saints, Rev. vii. 15—17.

Then there is the Doxology, or the Ascriptions of glory to God.

The Kingdom is God's, 1 Chron. xxix. 11; Mal. i. 14; Matt. v. 35. The Power is God's, Dan. iv. 35; Jer. x. 6. The Glory is God's, Ex. xv. 11; Ps. lxxii. 19; Jer. xvii. 12. For ever, Is. ix. 7; Dan. vii. 14.

And lastly, *Amen*, to be said at the end of the prayer, as well as other parts of the service, it being a Hebrew word, signifying true or faithful, and employed in our Liturgy to express when used at the end of a prayer, the strong desire of the suppliants that the petitions may be granted, or when uttered at the end of a creed, a declaration that they believe in the truths it propounds. One of the fathers of the Church said, "the early Christians raised themselves as they uttered it, as if they desired that that word should carry up their bodies as well as their souls to heaven." Should

not this primitive zeal shame those who frequently do not move their lips when the word is appointed to be used, that every one may make the petitions or declarations which have preceded it, his own?

LESSON XI.

The Responses.

After the Lord's prayer, which sums up the petitions of the first part of the service, we have a few sentences, alternately from the minister and the congregation; preparatory to the song of praise, the 95th Psalm.

The Confession is followed by the Absolution, and that fitly by praise; but we find throughout, that prayer is closely mingled with praise; for our necessities are numberless, and our very praise imperfect, and needing to be pardoned for those imperfections.

Short ejaculations such as these Responses, are found in all the old Liturgies of the early Church, being so called from the circumstance of the people answering the minister, after the example of the Jews who recite their public hymns and prayers by course. Our confession has freed our burdened consciences: the declaration of the Divine mercy has revived our hope, and in the Lord's prayer we have sought our reconciled Father: we now desire to praise Him in the language of holy gratitude, and therefore pray,

I.—"O Lord, open Thou our lips."

II.—"And our mouth shall show forth thy praise."

Why this prayer? Will not our lips open of our own will to praise God? No! we can neither love God, nor praise God without his help. He can alone make us feel what we owe to Him, and put the feeling of thankfulness in our hearts, and the words of it on our lips.

It is almost word for word a prayer of David's—read Ps. li. 15.

And we find it said, that God had put a song in the mouth of his people, Ps. xl. 3; cxliv. 9; Is. xxvi. 1.

How sad to feel that we are backward to praise God, when his mercies to us are so numberless! How it shows the natural unthankfulness of the human heart. Read Rom. i. 21. We shall not be so cold and backward in heaven See, in Rev. v. 8; vii. 9, 10, what songs of praise are uttered there.

Now let us look at the two next sentences.

III.—"O God, make speed to save us!"

IV.—"O Lord, make haste to help us!"

These two mean just the same thing; it is common in Scripture to express the same truth twice over in language the same in sense, but different in words.

Why should we ask God to help us *quickly?* 1st. Because our wants are great. If He were to leave us without help, we must perish. 2nd. Because our danger is pressing. Our enemies are always on the watch for us—our own hearts are always prone to wander, and we do not know whether *this may not be our last opportunity* for seeking help. Read David's prayer, Ps, cxliii. 7.

After these sentences, which are prayers, the whole congregation stand up, and together praise God; first, in what is called the *Gloria Patri* (two Latin words, meaning glory to the Father), and then in two sentences.

"Praise ye the Lord."

"The Lord's name" (that is, God Himself) "be praised."

The *Gloria Patri* comes over again very often in the service; let us try and understand it.

But first—Why should we all just at that moment praise God? Because we have just had the gracious promise and declaration of his forgiving (absolving) mercy through Christ Jesus. Could there be anything more deserving the thankfulness of poor, sinful man than that? See what St. Paul thought of God's mercy to himself, and to all men, Ephes. ii. 4; iii. 19; and also St. John's words, 1 John iv. 10.

Now for the *Gloria Patri* (all should stand up and repeat it slowly and distinctly). What is glory? Think what you mean by a glorious throne—a glorious sun-set. You mean that it is both beautiful and grand; something to make you feel pleasure mingled with awe.

Earthly glory is not to be compared with God's heavenly glory, Ex. xxxiii. 20; Is. xl. 18; xlvi. 5; 1 Tim. vi. 16. None of us could look on that glory and live. You remember the hymn

"How glorious is our Heavenly King."

But God *has* all that glory! Why, then, should we say, "Glory be to God!" Can God have *more* glory? No; but more people may feel his glory, and more people may speak of it; and so, in one sense, the glory of God shall increase. And one great way in which God's glory is increased is by the salvation of sinners through Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. iv. 11.

But the chief meaning of the words here is, that the whole congregation stand up and acknowledge God's great glory, and that He ought to be honoured, and glorified, and praised.

Now notice that we give glory to three Persons in one God, the three Persons of whom John speaks in 1 John v. 7; and why? God the Father is glorious, because He made us and sustains us; the Son is glorious, because He died for us; and the Holy Spirit is glorious, because He makes us to be born again, and sanctifies us. The Triune God had perfect glory from the beginning: read John xvii. 5; He has it now, and will have it for ever, as we see in Matt. vi. 13.

LESSON XII.

The Invitatory Psalm.

The next part of the Service is the 95th Psalm, which is to be read every Sunday, except the 19th day of the month, when it comes in the regular course and could not well be read twice over. It was originally called the *Invitatory* Psalm, for in the early Church the service began with it, and was sung in a loud voice, to hasten those people to Church who were waiting in the neighbourhood till prayers commenced. Our Reformers assigned it its present place, as a preparation for the following Psalms, Lessons and Collects.

Let us now look at the Psalm, and see (if we can) why it is considered so full of meaning as to be always used.

There are eleven verses in it, and it exhorts us, first to *praise* God, showing us how and wherefore we should do so (v. 1—5); to *pray* to Him, in what manner, and for what reason (v. 6, 7); and to *hear* God's Word speedily and willingly (v. 10, 11), giving us a caution against hardening our hearts, by the instance of the Jews, whose punishment is set before us, to warn us against despising or distrusting God (v. 8—11).

Let us read the Psalm through.

Verses 1, 2. These verses are an exhortation from one to the other to praise God; to sing to Him (we are told that the angels sing to Him, Job xxxviii. 7)

to rejoice in the strength of our salvation, *i.e.*, to rejoice in Almighty God, who is our salvation, Ex. xv. 2; to come before his presence, *i.e.*, to come into his temple (a place where He especially promises to be present, Ex. xx. 24) with thanksgiving.

Verses 3—5. These verses give us reasons for praising God.

1st. He is great—so wondrously great, that no one else is worthy to be named at the same time; not even "the gods," which means the kings and great men of the earth, as it means in Ex. xxii. 28.

2nd. He is the Creator and Preserver of the world. To have "the corners," *i.e.*, the various parts of the earth in his hand, means that his hand made them and sustains them; read Is. lxvi. 2. The strength of the hills is his also, means that *He* made the hills so strong, as they are said to be in Ps. cxxv. 1; Hab. iii. 6. All creation is his, for He is the great Creator.

Verse 6.—Here is another exhortation to praise God as *our* Maker, and that in the humble reverent way which He requires; He would have us approach Him with a holy fear, Mal. i. 14; Is. lxvi. 2.

Verse 7.—Here is a fresh reason for praising God. He is to us as a shepherd to his sheep. He leads us with "his hand" to "his pasture." So David calls God his shepherd, Ps. xxiii. 1; lxxx. 1. Isaiah foretold Christ as a Shepherd, Is. xl. 11; and Jesus applied the title to Himself, John x. 14.

Verse 8—11.—These words are solemn, and we should try and feel them. For when we hear them, it is as if God said once more, "To-day, hear me!" God speaks to us by his Bible and his ministers; and we are not to harden our hearts, that is, we are not to refuse to hear Him.

Then we are reminded of some who did harden their hearts against God—*when* they did—and the dreadful consequences. Who were they? "Your fathers," the Jews in the wilderness, read Numbers xiv. 10, 11, to see how they hardened their hearts. And when? God calls it the day of provocation and temptation. They tempted God and proved Him, that is, tried his faithfulness, and whether He would punish sin; read Ps. cvi. 14, 24.

What was the dreadful end of it? God was grieved with them, and they all perished in the Wilderness, Num. xxvi. 64, 65; as He had said in his wrath. Not one of them (save the two faithful men, Caleb and Joshua), entered into Canaan, the rest which God had prepared for the Israelites; read Num. xiv. 29, 30; 1 Cor. x. 5.

We see, then, that this Psalm is especially fit for the service, because, 1st, it teaches us to praise God; 2nd, it warns us to hear God. Let us try if we can do both this day.

LESSON XIII.

The Psalms.

After the 95th Psalm, it is appointed that a portion of the Psalms shall be read; for which purpose the Psalms are divided into sixty parts, one for the morning and one for the evening of every one of the thirty days which a month usually contains. When there are thirty-one days, the thirtieth day is used for the thirty-first, if the latter be a Sunday.

By this means there is a variety in the service, and we read *more* of Scripture than if we always kept to the same.

Let us endeavour to get an idea of what the Psalms are, as distinguished from the other parts of the Bible. The Bible is all from God, and *all* good, as St. Paul says, 2 Tim. iii. 16. But it is not all *alike*. Open at Gen. i., and run your eye down it. Now open Job, and look down any one of the chapters in the middle of

the Book. Now look over a chapter in Proverbs; now one in Isaiah; now one in the Epistles of Paul. All these are inspired; but are they all alike? No; all different. Genesis is history; Isaiah is poetry; so is Job; but Isaiah is prophecy also. The Proverbs are wise sentences; the Epistles are letters full of argument.

Now, what are the Psalms? and why (do you suppose) should we read them so much?

It would do us little good to hear of God if we never ourselves *talked to Him*; and this is just what many of the Psalms lead us to do. Turn to the 63rd, 77th, 86th, and many others. You will see that they give us the very words we may use in approaching God. Therefore, the Book of Psalms is called a Devotional Book.

Again. We ought to praise God; and here come in the Psalms with the very words we ought to use; as this 95th, and the 103rd, and the 107th. Then there are wise sayings in the Psalms; as in the 1st, 15th, and 49th. There is comfort in them for the troubled, as in the 32nd, and 51st; and for all the people of God, as in the 91st and 121st. Some of them describe God's glory and love very beautifully, as the 19th, 103rd, and 145th. Lastly, many of them are prophetic, and foretell the work, the sufferings, the glory of Christ; such as the 2nd, 40th, 45th, and 110th.

If you will think of all this, you will see why the Psalms are so constantly read in Church. For they are the inspired experiences of God's servants of old, under every variety of circumstance, and thus form a sort of Liturgy ready formed for the utterance of the homage of Christ's people in all ages. The principal part of the ancient services were composed of Psalms. Those we read in Church are the translations made by Tyndale and Coverdale for the great English Bible, and are not quite the same in word (although in effect), as those in the last Authorised Version. Our mode of reading them in the service, alternately by the minister and congregation, is both an ancient practice among Christians, and also among the Jews,—the Psalms which were composed expressly for the service of the Temple being written in alternate verse. Musical instruments were then used in the public services, and organs were early introduced into Christian Churches.

Every worshipper is expected to take part in these hymns of praise, and in the utterance of the petitions with which they are mingled, else would the invitation, "Praise ye the Lord," and the ready response, "The Lord's name be praised," be without a meaning.

But, when reading the Psalms in their course in the Church, we must not forget that many of them were composed in the name of God's chosen people of old, and others are typical of Messiah and his kingdom: and that there are various supplications and sentiments contained in them respecting the enemies of the chosen people and of Christ's Church, which are evidently inapplicable to the state of the individual believer, and which it would not be proper for him to use, speaking in his own person, but can only be employed by the elect servants of the Messiah, in his name, as members of His kingdom.

LESSON XIV.

The Lessons.

In the preceding Lesson we have been speaking of the Psalms, and shewing how they meet our need for use in Divine worship, being full of prayer, praise, confession, and instruction. At the end of each Psalm we are to repeat the *Gloria Patria*, (already explained in Lesson xi.), partly to praise God for his

general goodness to us, and partly to thank him for giving us those very Psalms.

The Rubric, (or *direction* for what is to be said or done, which used to be, and is still sometimes printed in *red* letters—the word *ruber* being Latin for red), next calls for our special notice. We will read it through, and also the one following the Benedicite.

I. It speaks of a Calendar divided into months, at the beginning of the Prayer Book, in which the Scripture lessons are appointed,—first one out of the Old Testament, then one out of the New. If we refer to that Calendar we shall find that it gives two Lessons for every morning and two for every evening. By this arrangement the principal portions of the Old Testament are read once in the year, and the whole of the New Testament (excepting the Apocalypse) three times. Thus the Reformers showed their desire to honour the Bible, and that all they taught might be brought plainly and honestly to the test of Divine Truth. Therefore they directed the Scriptures so to be read that the whole scheme of God's providence, and the plan of salvation, should be laid before the people. Both the Old and New Testaments have equal authority—for what is the Law but the Gospel foreshadowed? What the Gospel but this Law fulfilled? That which lies in the one under a shadow is in the other brought out into the open sun; things there prefigured are here performed, and thus the veil of the Law helps us to bear the light breaking forth in the Gospel.

But II. The Rubric says, "except there be proper Lessons assigned" (or appointed) "for that day." If we turn again to the Tables at the beginning of the Prayer Book we shall find one headed "Proper Lessons for every Sunday and Holy-day, throughout the year." Those Lessons are chosen with some regularity. for the Books of the Old Testament are taken in turn, Genesis beginning on Septuagesima Sunday, although only a few chapters in each Book could be selected, to make a course for one year.

Notice that these are only First Lessons, either for matins (*i.e.* Morning Service) or Even-song (*i.e.* Evening Service), but as the Second Lesson in the Monthly Calendar is always out of the New Testament, it comes to pass that whether it be a Sunday or a week-day you will always hear in church one Lesson from the Old Testament, and one from the New in the morning, and so also in the evening.

III. There are some most important directions about the *manner* of reading the Bible. It is to be read "distinctly," with an audible voice, (*i.e.* aloud) and the reader is so to stand and turn to the people that all present (as far as possible) may hear him. This direction, although it might seem superfluous, was rendered necessary—for in the Romish Church the priests were in the habit (as they still are) of repeating the prayers and service with their backs to the people before the altar, in a low, monotonous tone, and in a tongue which is not understood by the majority of those present. The Reformers corrected this abuse; and as we hear the Bible read constantly and regularly in our native tongue in our churches, we may well thank God for the privileges which the Reformation obtained for us, and remember with gratitude those good and holy men who were ready even to die to obtain such privileges. In no Church is the Bible so honoured by extensive and constant use as in the Church of England; even our dissenting brethren, much as they prize it, do not incorporate it with their prayers and praise, and bring every part of it *in order* before the people as is the practice among ourselves.

Why should we value the Bible so much? Who is its Author? What does it tell us of Him? What does it teach us about ourselves? What is it compared to by David and by Peter? These are questions for which we may profitably seek answers from the Bible itself; and each should also ask himself the question, Do really love the Bible?

The Lecture.

HOW TO INTEREST OUR SCHOLARS IN MISSIONS.

An Address, delivered before the Sunday School Teachers' Class of the Islington branch of the Church of England Young Men's Society, on Tuesday 29th of October, 1861, by the Rev. L. Stanham, B.A., (Curate) St. Mary, Islington.

From the earliest periods of the Christian Church, the extension of our Saviour's kingdom into all parts of the known world, became a subject of interest and active exertion. And this was the case, not simply because of our Lord's command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," but because Missionary effort is connected with the very existence and life of Christianity. Whilst the spirit of Judaism was intrinsically selfish and exclusive, the spirit of Christianity is essentially unselfish and expansive. Whilst the Jew was taught to look upon his own people as the especially chosen and favoured of God, the Christian is taught to look upon the whole world as those for whom Christ died, as the people whom God has designed for *his* inheritance. And accordingly, well organized and vigorous efforts were soon made by the early Christian Church, to erect the standard of the Cross in every land, to recruit the ranks of Christ's army from every nation, to sound the Gospel trumpet within the hearing reach of all.

Our Lord himself has beautifully illustrated this *expansive principle* of Christianity, by the parable of the mustard seed,—the kingdom of God, whether received into the heart of an individual, or existing in a community, possessing a *latent* power which causes it, like the mustard seed, immediately that it is sown, to unfold itself, and then to increase like as a tree stretching out its branches, as a refuge and shelter for all. And so we may understand how Christian *vitality* and Christian *expansiveness* are co-existent. In other words, how a Missionary spirit becomes *identical* with a Christian spirit; how all that concerns the advancement of Christ's cause on earth, forms a subject of interest to the individual soul; how it is bound up with a Christian's own growth in grace, his own healthy vigour and stability in the ways of God.

Starting then with the assertion, that Missionary effort is not only a duty descending upon us from the parting charge of our Lord, but that it forms part and parcel of the spirit of true Christianity, it will be well to consider whether Missionary subjects are *adapted* to interest the young; whether the children of our schools can be roused to enter heartily into the cause of Missions, to help them forward with their prayers and offerings; to determine perhaps, in future years, (if it be the will of God) to devote themselves personally to the work.

There are two things connected with the *Mission subject*, which seem especially calculated to engage the attention of the young.

The first is, that *it appeals to the*

generous feelings of our nature, which in youth are easily brought into exercise. If a teacher, besides dwelling upon Christ's love to all; his sufferings and active exertion in behalf of all, set forth for our example, can graphically describe the curses which idolatry has brought, the cruelties submitted to, and tortures undergone, in order to propitiate some senseless block of wood or stone, he will touch a chord in a child's heart, which may at once awaken his sympathy for the poor heathen thus degraded. Few children can listen to a description of the practice of infanticide in the East, where little babes, like the one which many a scholar fondles and caresses at his home, are cruelly murdered, and their bodies left to be devoured by dogs—or of the desertion of aged parents, who are literally starved to death, when they become old and infirm—without a feeling of pity and commiseration. And if a teacher can shew that all such cruelties are generally countenanced, and sometimes considered virtues, in those dark places of the earth where the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ has never shone, a child can hardly fail to desire that those people should be taught to renounce such practices, and to enjoy the blessings of a pure Christianity in their stead. And even should a scholar ask, as a child once asked his teacher, "Why does not God change their hearts, and teach them differently?" his judicious guide would give an answer, which would shew the *child's* responsibility in the matter, rather than *God's*, and from that moment, perhaps, evoke his scholar's interest in Missionary work.

But again, *the Missionary subject appeals to that love of adventure, which exists so strongly in the young.* On this account, Missionary travels and incidents readily engage the attention of children.

The character of the different people amongst whom a Missionary labours, their customs and prejudices, their superstitions and idolatries, their reception of the Missionaries, their reasonings and discussions, all form a variety of matter, which by the skilful teacher, can be made exceedingly interesting and inviting. Then the general dangers and trials of Missionary life, the journeys in mountains and deserts, through jungles and swamps, the swimming of rivers, the pressure of drought or heat, the severities of frost and snow, the occurrences in populous cities or villages, the standing up, as the Apostles did, in the market places or in the heathen temples, sometimes brought before kings and rulers for Christ's sake and the Gospel's—all furnish a fund of interest to the youthful mind, almost as pleasing and attractive as the Bible narratives themselves.

It cannot therefore be said, that Christian Missions are unsuited to enlist the sympathies of the young, but rather, that from the many appeals which they make both to a child's love of adventure, and to the generous feelings of his nature, they are especially adapted to excite his interest, and to engage his heart's affections. We have then to consider how we may best encourage this Missionary interest in our scholars, and how we may best increase and strengthen it when it is excited.

It appears to me that there are three main courses to pursue in order to accomplish these results.

I. *Teachers must take a warm and lively interest in Missionary work themselves.*

II. *There must be well arranged and well prosecuted plans for bringing the subject before the children.*

III. *The individual conversion of our children's souls to God, must form a subject for increased prayer and effort.*

I. *Teachers must take a warm and lively interest in Missionary work themselves.*

It was said, that our Saviour declared,

in the parable of the mustard seed, that the extension of his kingdom *must* go on wherever that kingdom has been set up, whether amongst a community, or in the heart of an individual. In other words, that a Missionary spirit forms an essential part of the true Christian spirit. Our Lord, by another parable, the parable of the leaven hid in three measures of meal, has further taught us, that where the true Christian spirit exists, it more or less influences all with whom it comes in contact. And so applying this to the Missionary, the constant companion of the Christian spirit, it may be said, that from a teacher who loves the cause of Missions, an influence *must* emanate, which will reach all under his instruction. It will be no cold account of some formal truth about the claims of a distant people, who have got some curious customs or degrading worship, but the awakening of a warm and living sympathy within them—a feeling which will penetrate into the inner recesses of the children's hearts, and which will soon *leaven* them with the desire to do the heathen good. No child is so dead to moral influence, as not to catch a spark of life from the enthusiasm of a teacher; and no subject is more capable of being taken up *with enthusiasm*, than the salvation of the heathen, with which Christ has entrusted us; and therefore, to enkindle the warmth and life of Missionary zeal in the hearts of our children, the fire of Mission love must first burn brightly in our own. To encourage an active interest in all that concerns the salvation of the heathen, a teacher himself must first become prayerfully alive to their necessities and claims. Everybody knows that icicles will never light a fire, nor a dead body rise up and help another. And so if the teachers and superintendent of a School, are surrounded with the icy frost of *indifference to*, or the more deadly atmosphere *of ignorance of* Missionary work, little must be expected from their scholars, but the same coldness, apathy, and indifference.

In order that teachers themselves may keep up their Missionary interest, Missionary periodicals should be read with the desire of obtaining solid and intelligent information from them. The "Church Missionary Intelligencer" gives comprehensive and historical accounts of most of the Mission fields, whilst the "Church Missionary Record" contains extracts from the journals of Missionaries themselves. These two publications alone, if only regularly and carefully digested, would do much towards giving a good general acquaintance with Missions, and would further and foster a sympathising interest in them. And then with regard to Missionary meetings being useful to *teachers*, in stirring up their zeal in the Mission cause, I entertain an opinion that they do not generally *accomplish* this object; for the teachers in boys' schools are unfortunately to be seldom seen, either at the Anniversary parochial or quarterly Juvenile Missionary Meetings. Whether it be that the first are not sufficiently useful, as they suppose, for practical purposes in the Sunday school, or the latter too childish and simple for *their* instruction, or because *they* are not so often asked (as they might be asked if they were interested in Missions) to address the children; yet the fact remains, that they are seldom to be found present, and it is left to the patience and self-denial of the ladies, to calm any of the restless spirits amongst the boys, and with their kind smiles and welcome presence, to encourage the Mission work amongst them. But it must be remembered, that unless an interest in Mission work be shewn at these meetings by ALL the teachers, the children cannot think that it is of much importance, if they be lukewarm also; and however stirring may have been the appeals of the speakers, to rouse the interest and to encourage the offerings of the children, when the teacher pre-

sents the box for contributions at his class on Sunday, he is hardly felt to be the proper person to "hold the plate," unless he should judiciously preface his appeal by a liberal donation to the box himself. In order to encourage Sunday school teachers to a love for Missions, I believe we need special *addresses* delivered to them, or what is perhaps better still, periodical *lectures* upon all the various countries and people of the world, which should bring out clearly and fully, the main features in their history, their departures from or near approach to, the worship and service of the true God; and also a sketch of Mission work amongst them. And I believe that if our Missionary Societies would but organize and pay for such lectures, the returns, even in a pecuniary point of view, would adequately repay the outlay.

Although then, the Missionary spirit as has been said, will always form a part of the true Christian spirit, yet it nevertheless requires *special attention* and *special fuel*, to keep its fire of love burning brightly; and unless a teacher give such special attention, and store up all needful knowledge upon the subject—unless his own soul be *fired* with Missionary zeal, little warmth or light will be found in his class; his scholars will be cold and dead to Missionary interest, and what is worse than all, their Christianity will begin to be cold and lifeless also.

But,

II. *There must be well arranged and well prosecuted plans for bringing the Missionary subject before the children.*

And, I would suggest, that,

1. There should be a *separate Missionary Association* connected with each Sunday School.

2. This Society should have *part* of its officers and collectors comprised of the *elder scholars* of the school.

3. These elder scholars should be invited to join with the teachers in a *Monthly Prayer Meeting* for Missions, and in arranging *other* meetings for promoting the Mission cause.

4. The School Missionary Society should, if possible, *connect itself with some portion of the Mission Field*, either by paying for the education of some heathen children in it, or by making some especial contributions towards it.

5. *Cards* and *Boxes* should be judiciously distributed amongst the children, in order that they might make collections *at their homes*, and amongst their friends.

6. There should be periodical *sermons*, *addresses*, and *specially appointed lessons* given, besides the circulation of small *serials* and *books*, and frequent *allusions* to the Missionary subject in the ordinary Sunday lessons.

With regard to the advantage to be derived from the separate Sunday School Missionary Society, it commends itself to my mind for more than one reason. The *first* is, that its very *existence* in a school gives a *prominence* and *importance* to the Mission subject in that school, which it fails to secure when all the Missionary efforts made in the school are *summarily* dealt with or almost overlooked at the Quarterly or Anniversary Juvenile Meetings for the whole parish. The mere fact that the *number* of children contributing from our Boys', Girls', and Infants' Schools, far exceeds the number who contribute from any other class of children in a parish, is of itself a proof that the former have a claim for especial encouragement at the hands of their pastors and teachers. And then they deserve this especial commendation, because the poor children's *mite* cast into the treasury of the Lord is often given (as the widow's was) not out of their abundance but out of their deep poverty. And such a full recognition and approval of their habits of self-denial, by especial means employed to set forth Christ's (in the heathen's) claims upon them, would, I believe, incite

them to increased liberality, and to *more* love and attachment to the Mission cause. But, besides this, we have the combined action of the whole school brought to bear at *particular times* upon *particular objects*. And every one knows that such united and concentrated efforts must be more effectual for the advancement of any good work in a school, than irregular and isolated ones (however vigorous) in particular classes. But another reason for establishing a separate school Missionary Association is, that a *definiteness* is given to the Missionary interest in the school, which it hardly assumes when general appeals to the children are made to assist the spread of the Gospel. The progress of *our* Society, the success of *our* Missionary Meetings, the advancement of Christ's cause at *our* Mission station: all these are rallying points for attacking the enemies, *lukewarmness* and *indifference*, and for strengthening the position of the Mission cause.

Again, the employment of some of the elder scholars as officers and collectors to the School Association, is next recommended as an useful method of securing the co-operation of the whole school. The example and active influence of those who move in their own sphere of life is a persuasive argument for inducing others to follow; and a few really converted elder scholars in a school invited to join in prayer, and to assist in carrying out the plans for exciting the Missionary interest, would soon excite an interest upon ALL the scholars which the teachers and superintendents alone could never obtain. It is but adopting one of the principles, which has been attended with such great results, in the use of Scripture Readers, City Missionaries, and Bible Women; and if I remember rightly, a plan which is carried out with much success in some of the large Dissenting schools in the North of England. And the returns made to the Missionary Societies, besides the calling out of many an elder scholar to become either a Missionary, schoolmaster or mistress, has exhibited its advantages, and strongly invites a trial of it.

That the School Society should, if possible, connect itself with some portion of the Mission field by making a contribution towards the education of one or more children abroad, or simply by an exchange of correspondence; this, I know, has been tried with much success in more than one school. Great interest has been produced by keeping up a regular correspondence with the children or their instructors. Letters from the elder scholars to those of their own age and sex in a Foreign Mission, has forged another link of Missionary interest, and created a desire to attend to the appeals for increased help abroad. Presents of needlework sent from the girls, and little offerings coming in return from poor native children, have done much to draw out the heart's affections and sympathy, and to fulfil in another sense the passage, "Whom not having seen ye love." But, above all, the cry from them, "Come over and help us; there are hearts here who would welcome and love you, who need your prayers and increased endeavours to enlighten the darkness which enshrouds our poor native kinsmen and brethren," such earnest and affectionate appeals from those who begin to feel the blessings of Christianity themselves, are powerful instruments for exciting our Missionary zeal and love, and for leading ALL the more heartily to aid the Mission cause.

Another point which has been suggested may require a few remarks, viz., the distribution of cards or boxes by the superintendent (upon the recommendation of the teachers) for the children to collect contributions at their homes. This plan is largely adopted by some Dissenting bodies, and with much success. Although we

might not entirely approve of the "begging system" upon which some children go round from house to house with their cards, and insensibly acquire a habit of boldness which is inconsistent with the Christian character, yet I have met with more than one instance of Missionary zeal in a child accompanied with Christian modesty in "asking an alms" which might put to shame much of the lukewarmness and false timidity of older persons. And if the heart of a child be really touched with love to Christ, and sympathy for the degraded heathen, *he* would not be acting the part of a Christian who should attempt to check the warm gush of a generous nature, even should a child's zeal be untempered by knowledge. And the mere undertaking of such a work on a child's part with the sanction of the superintendent, should be some guarantee for sincerity. The Missionary sermons, addresses, and lessons call perhaps for no particular remark, but such a scheme as that now suggested, if carried out in a spirit of prayer and dependence upon God, might be made most useful in fostering a Missionary interest amongst our scholars.

But,

III. *The individual conversion of our children's souls to God must form a subject for increased prayer and effort.*

As has been remarked the vitality of the Church at home is the main cause of its expansive growth and prosperity abroad. The blessings of true religion enjoyed by the individual soul lead it at once to desire that others may enjoy them also. We need not fear in the least about the success of Missions, if there were but true vital godliness animating every professing Christian's heart. When the Missionary cause first started into vigour in this country it was when true evangelical principles began to leaven part of the Christian Church. And just so will it be with regard to Missionary interest in a school. Let but each teacher or scholar have the love of Christ animating him, he will first become a witness for the Truth himself, he will then desire that witnesses for Christ should testify in every land and carry Gospel light to all who need it. This is the true foundation for all Missionary interest. No outward machinery, nor driving power, can make a seed germinate and expand to a fruit-bearing tree, if the living principle exists not within itself. And no well arranged plans for awakening Missionary interest, no stimulating address, nor lesson, can infuse that vital principle of love to Christ and to souls, for Christ's sake, which is the foundation and source of all true interest in Missionary work. Therefore, prayer for a heavenly influence to descend, earnest pleading for the souls of our children before a throne of grace must precede and accompany all other efforts to excite sympathy in the Mission cause. And then if the incorruptible seed of the Word be sown in a child's heart, it will soon display its expansive property. The spark of Divine love implanted there may soon be fanned into a flame of Missionary zeal. A rich harvest of Mission fruit will be reaped both from the class and school where such spiritual work has taken place. And the Gospel coming to our children as it did to the Thessalonians, "not in word only but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost," a record will be furnished, as it was of those Christians, that they "were ensamples to all that believe," for that from them "sounded out the Word of the Lord," *i.e.* a Missionary spirit and action soon displayed themselves, and in *every* place "faith to God-ward was spread abroad."

In conclusion, I would commend this subject to the prayerful and thoughtful consideration of all present. We do, without doubt, require very much more Missionary life and zeal in

our schools than at present exist amongst us. With the exception of one school in this parish, the subscription from each Sunday School child, on behalf of Missions, does not amount to more than two or three pence per year. And taking collections from Sunday Schools generally, in connection with the Church of England, the average, from all that I can ascertain, is even less. I feel sure that the Missionary subject is not taken up by teachers, collectively, as it ought to be. The extension of Christ's kingdom in Foreign lands should be as dear to them as its advancement in their own. Christianity recognises no outward distinctions. Heaven's populace will not be English men and women and children. The multitude, which no man can number, comes out of every country and people and clime. Christ is no respecter of persons. He has "made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth." He loves them all, and died for them all. And, therefore, he who desires not their salvation, he who would leave them in their degradation and ignorance, or he who merely sighs and folds his hands as if *he* could do nothing at all to help them, has not the mind of Christ, can hardly be said to care for the extension of Christ's work at all, cares little for the children entrusted to his especial care, has a wrong view of his own mission and work on earth. I would again remark that an union amongst Sunday School Teachers, generally, for aiding Missionary efforts abroad, is most desirable. But united efforts in each school, united prayer and distinct endeavours amongst every little company of teachers would not only benefit the Mission cause, but become another link for cementing the bonds of Christian fellowship amongst themselves.

Differences of opinion may possibly be entertained upon the advantages to be derived from a separate School Missionary Association, but it commends itself strongly to my mind because of the importance and definiteness which it will give to the Mission cause in the school, and because it will bring combined effort at the same time to bear upon the subject.

I would gladly have put these thoughts together in a more complete and finished form, but the pressure of other duties has forced me to postpone the subject till the last moment.

But do, my dear friends, let us be "up and doing" in the extension of Christ's kingdom. The Missionary talent is one which may be well and profitably employed. It will bring us back a rich cargo of spiritual "gold, silver, and precious stones." The cry of the heathen at the last day, "No man cared for my soul," will be a terrible one if it be allowed to reach our ears. Whilst the smile of a Saviour's welcome will be a ravishing one when He points to the happy faces not only of our children converted unto God, but to that large company standing around them—the sable African, the swarthy Indian, the pale Chinese, or the once Mahomedan, Turk, or Jew,—whom the united efforts of scholars and teachers have brought to a knowledge of his love. And then all will unite in adoring the grace which has enabled each to help the other. All will be prepared to give the praise to Him, who showed us *how* to love our neighbour, when He commanded us to do it, that all honour and glory, might, majesty, and dominion might be given unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever, Amen.

Plans and Intelligence.

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

No. IV.

FEW schools have had a more humble beginning than that in which it was my happiness and privilege to work.

On the first Sunday in April, 1832, might have been seen assembled together, in the very small room of an Infant School, in the heart of the City, *four children* and a young lady, who (having but just left school herself), was quite inexperienced in Sunday school management. An elder lady, however, was present to direct and encourage. She was one of a few Christian women who had been stirred up to pity the *little ones* of the City poor, in the days when schools for their benefit were almost unknown, and had succeeded in establishing, in a small upper room of an old house in the "Pudding Lane" of old notoriety, a school for *infant* poor, named afterwards, the "South East City Infant School." * This Infant School soon outgrew its accommodation in Pudding Lane, and found a new home in the old and delapidated Rectory House of the parish of St. Dionis Back Church, situate in Lime Street, Fenchurch Street. From that house, in consequence of increasing delapidations, it was removed to the upper floors of an opposite warehouse, from which again, some years after, the school was most suddenly *ejected*, owing to some change of landlord, and was very nearly closed for want of a shelter. Its friends, however, unwilling to relinquish what had proved for many years a valuable blessing to their poor neighbours, succeeded, at last, in placing the school again in its old Rectory House, where it still exists and thrives.

These circumstances have been narrated, because from the birth of the *little* SUNDAY SCHOOL in April, 1832, the fate of the two schools had been linked together. The lady, whose heart had been directed to the first good work, observed that although Sunday schools for bringing up the children of the City poor as *Dissenters*, were numerous, their was not one within their reach belonging to the Church of England. She, therefore, sought to open the doors of the Infant School on the Sabbath; and being hindered herself by

* It may be interesting to mention that in this same "little room," a few years after, was held a pleasant supper party (*rare in those days*) given by a few neighbours in an adjacent large thoroughfare, which was being re-paved, to the NAVVIES employed in that work. The writer well remembers the occasion; the sober enjoyment of the twenty-five or thirty men over their old English fare, and their devout attention to the wise and profitable address afterwards given to them by the Rev. J. Rodber, then rector of the parish in which this happy assembly room was situated.

domestic ties, she urged upon her young friend to put her "hand to the plough."

We believe that this suggestion was *of good*, and that feeble as have been the many instruments since used in that work, the results will be *great* in the last day.

The four scholars who first met, and formed the nucleus of "the Lime Street Sunday School," were trebled in the course of a week or two: and, before the middle of summer, the young teacher was obliged to resort to the help of the Infant School mistress, because no one else could be found. The school rapidly increased, and when the young teacher returned at the end of summer, from a short holiday in the country, she found a room full in the hands of her willing help-mate. This was most promising, although the difficulty of teaching these thirty or forty children divided into only two classes, was not a small hindrance. Encouraged, however, by the counsels and prayers of godly parents, and the friend who had first suggested the work, the solitary teacher persevered, and in the early part of November, her hands were strengthened, and her responsibilities shared by two ladies and a gentleman, who very unexpectedly offered themselves. From this time the little school presented a new aspect. The number of scholars steadily increased; other teachers were soon added to the little band, and on the suggestion of the gentleman just alluded to, who had become superintendent of the school, monthly Teachers' Meetings were set on foot for the arrangement of business, the discussion of new plans, and for the mutual improvement of the members by means of Papers on a given text or subject, which were read at these meetings.

Perhaps some may chance to see these pages who were amongst the teachers of the Lime Street School in those early days; such will recal these gatherings of *youthful* friends,—for there was not then one clergyman in the district embraced by the little school, who was resident in his parish, and disposed to act as pastoral superintendent.

There is, however, reason to hope that these Teachers' Meetings were useful, not only at the time in reference to the school management, but to the individual members in connexion with their after course. Several of that company of Sunday school friends are now, though scattered, companions in the work of their common Lord and Saviour, and may have been "stirred up" and strengthened in the faith by these efforts of youthful fellow-teachers to help one another. One, the early and indefatigable superintendent, is now amongst the "*working clergy*" of our honoured Church, and has the opportunity of taking a part in the work of the Sunday School Institute. Another, who took the place of the former as superin-

tendent, and worked as earnestly for many years in the most trying days of the school, has since proved his love to the cause by a long and hearty service to your "Institute" as one of the secretaries. A third is at this moment well known as a zealous and successful minister of the Gospel in London, although not now connected with the Church of England: others, again, in more private life, are, it is hoped, following up in earnest the profession of their early years, and carrying the Gospel into their daily avocation;—one as a surgeon of good repute; others, in the busy walks of commercial life.

Some amongst those friends of nearly thirty years ago, have been called *home*, and have entered the Church Triumphant. May they welcome, one by one, as the Lord of the harvest shall gather them, not only many of their *scholars*, but *every one* of their fellow-workers!

The writer has dwelt thus largely upon the teachers and their means of help, because she feels very strongly that the Sunday school may be and ought to be an important channel of blessing to those employed in it, as well as the children under instruction. Sunday school teaching ought to have a reflex influence upon those who engage in it. Many a one, who has gone forth to *teach*, has met with instruction never to be forgotten, and received in return a *larger* blessing than he thought to convey. Surely in the command, "cast thy bread upon the waters," there is hope that he who shall "find it after many days" shall share in its benefits!

Of the results of its work amongst the early SCHOLARS of this old school, many who were amongst its teachers may know more than the writer. It is certain however, that *many* have reaped and exhibited good fruits. One grew up to be an exemplary teacher of a girls' school; others, boys, can be traced in respectable life in business; one poor woman well known to some of the friends of the school, and now in deep poverty, is, it may truly be hoped, holding on feebly but faithfully in a Christian course. She was as a brand plucked from the burning—so naughty a child as to be at one time expelled from the school for hopeless insubordination. Her saving point, humanly speaking, was *personal attachment* to her teacher, and on her earnest entreaties, she was afterwards re-admitted, and from that time became one of the most hopeful of the class. There is no doubt that many others have reaped equal blessings with this child of poverty, though their cases may not be known to any of their former friends. But, if *no* results have been seen, past and present duty with regard to Sunday schools remains the same. We have no warrant that we *shall see* in this world the fruits of our labour. "In the morning sow thy seed: in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knowest not which shall prosper, or whether both shall be alike good."

Our plain duty is to sow, to labour;—with the Heavenly Husbandman it remains to water with the dews of his Holy Spirit and fructify the seed.

This is alike our *consolation* and our principle of work. If we might always see the result, where would be our practical faith, our self-denying labour of love?

Referring again for a moment to the details of this old school in its young days, one plan may be mentioned which was found successful, and may afford a hint perhaps to some in the present day under similar circumstances.

It was found that when Easter-tide brought round the old and notorious fair formerly held at Greenwich, members of children absented themselves on Easter Sunday and went to Greenwich.

The teachers eagerly sought to hold out some counter attraction and thus to keep their children from such scenes of wickedness. Accordingly on Easter Monday and Tuesday at a certain hour, the children were invited to present themselves at the school room, and prove that they were *not* gone to Greenwich. Such children as abstained from joining in that long accustomed pleasure to the poor of the city, were rewarded by being invited to a treat or festival at the school very soon afterwards.

It was found that the majority of the Sunday scholars were thus preserved from at least one scene of wickedness in the year, and to a great degree taught to forget it.

By this means an annual feast came into use, and proved quite satisfactory in its results. Sometimes tea and games in the school room, sometimes an excursion into the country. The first of those country fêtes will never be forgotten by the writer, as it proved to be the first introduction to *many* of the children to a country scene. Perhaps teachers who have never lived for years in a large city, will be unable to realise the fact that not a few of the children present on that first trip into the country had never before seen grass growing, and were found filling their pockets with what appeared to their eyes so charming, explaining that they were "gathering pretty *flowers* for mother!"

Such treats are now so common to scholars, and the facilities for even the very poor to see something of the country so great, that the delight of children in our *old* days will scarcely be understood.

Such are my early recollections of an old school—twenty years have elapsed since the Providence of God removed me from my loved work in Lime Street. Many changes have taken place in superintendents, teachers, scholars—yet still the old school is kept together, and amidst serious difficulties God has provided friends, when all seemed to fail. One (if not more) of the clergy of

the neighbouring parishes, has become friendly to the object, and is helping on the teachers, as I hear, by his kind counsels and sympathy.

The present statistics of the school are unknown to me. Perhaps some one of its friends will give a sequel to this imperfect sketch.

To hear of the present well-being and success of the work of their early days may serve to cheer and encourage some who are readers of your valuable periodical, and may have been like myself, warm friends and old teachers of the LIME STREET SUNDAY SCHOOL.

SUNDAY SCHOOL GOVERNMENT.

THE first idea of the Sunday-school was as simple as it well could be: it was to gather around a Christian teacher on the Sabbath day a few ignorant children, that they might be instructed in religious truth; and many such groups of children circling round their teachers from week to week throughout the country, would involve so little necessity for any organization that it may seem unnecessary to discuss Sunday-school government.

Happily, however, the system has become so widely spread, and has taken such deep root among us, that both in our beloved Church of England, and in all the dissenting communities, it is now felt to be necessary for every parish and congregation to have its Sunday-school, and in proportion to the extent and earnestness of these, will be the number of the scholars thus brought under religious instruction. When large multitudes are thus combined together, system becomes necessary to avoid confusion, and the waste of strength so often found to result from unguided labour; and when many persons are co-operating together to fulfil a defined object,—each a voluntary agent, and each exercising a certain measure of authority —it is needful, both for their own sakes, and for the cause they desire to promote, that the whole body should be brought under the supervision of a superior authority which all would recognise, and if need be, to which all would submit.

In offering these remarks on the subject, I set it down, therefore, as the first principle in Sunday School Government, that the Clergyman of the parish in which the school is situated, or the minister of the Church or Chapel to which it is attached, is, or should be, the head of the school. He is so, because the Sunday-school is merely accomplishing a part of the work which he has engaged to fulfil the children therein taught are those who constitute the lambs of his

own flock, whom it is his sacred duty to see brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and whose instruction he is bound himself to undertake, if it were not that (his other duties engaging all his time and thoughts), he is thus able to call to his aid the help of lay-members of his flock to assist him in this part of his labours. It is, therefore, necessary, (as he is responsible for the religious instruction of the children of his parish), that he should be in such a position of authority in the school where they are taught, as to be able at all times to satisfy himself that they are correctly and efficiently instructed by those to whom the duty is delegated, and that the mode and the matter of the teaching should alike be under his direction. In all things, therefore, which concern the government of the Sunday-school, the Clergyman of the Church is the head to whom all the members may properly look for help and guidance, and to whom it is their Christian duty to submit, or else to relinquish the charge they receive from him.

It may be that the clergy may find their time engrossed with other duties, and that but little is left which they may be able to devote to the care and government of their Sunday-schools; or they may assign the supervision of them to their curates, or to others in whom they place confidence. It is scarcely to be expected that the clergy can personally superintend their Sunday-schools, although wherever it is practicable, it is, doubtless, most desirable. There are, however, many details of duty falling to the share of a superindent, which it would be scarcely right to expect from the minister of religion, and it will always be well to have some layman carrying out the general rules and regulations of the school. The superintendent will, however, receive his authority from the clergyman whose representative he is; but the selection of a qualified person to fill this office, if made from among the teachers in the school, should be made with their full consent and concurrence, to avoid any ill-feeling or difficulty which might arise if the superintendent appointed without such approval from them, should afterwards, unhappily, find himself without their moral support in carrying on the government of the school. The plan of leaving the election of a superintendent to the teachers, subject to the confirmation of the clergyman, has been found useful and satisfactory in its results, as teachers cannot afterwards refuse obedience to an officer whose appointment has been made by their own consent, and with whose qualifications for the office they must be well acquainted. With respect to the appointment of teachers, they should either be selected by the clergyman, and elected by the teachers of the school, or if introduced by the latter, should have their appointment confirmed by the clergyman. As respects the children, the clergyman will, doubt-

less, feel it both his pleasure and his duty to lead them to look up to him as their pastor, and to minister among them, as opportunity arises, by words of counsel, or by examining them personally to ascertain their progress in attaining a knowledge of the faith and duty of a Christian.

The practice of appointing School Committees, consisting of lay-members of the Church, but who are not connected practically with the Sunday school, seems to be calculated to do more harm than good to the cause they are designed to promote. The idea upon which they have been introduced in some schools appears to have been that it would be an advantage to the school to enlist the sympathies of the wealthy or influential members of the congregation in its welfare, by bringing it under their immediate control and direction: but, on the other hand, by so doing, the clergyman virtually surrenders his own authority and position, and places a part of his ministerial work under the direction of members of his flock; who, in their turn, knowing nothing practically of the working of the Sunday school system are very likely to devise perfectly impracticable theories for its government, and to irritate and disturb those who are labouring patiently and perseveringly in the good cause, and who may justly be disposed to resent injudicious interference with their work by those who know nothing of its operation. A modification of the plan has been attempted in the shape of a mixed committee, consisting partly of teachers, and partly of laymen, unconnected with the school; but here, too, the same difficulty arises, and while for convenience or interest, it may be politic to secure the patronage of liberal donors to the school funds, it cannot be doubted that, as far as the management of the affairs of the school is concerned, it would be far better that it should rest exclusively with those whose hearts are in the work, who best know its peculiar necessities, and who certainly are most competent to direct it aright. I would suggest, therefore, that the school committee should consist, as I believe it usually does, of the superintendent and teachers, the president of such committee being the clergyman of the Church; these together must assuredly be the best able to order whatever is necessary for its well being; and these, by virtue of their office, have alone the right to give directions as to its government.

To the Committee, thus constituted, will belong the right of dispensing the school funds, agreeing to the rules which shall be enforced in the management of the school, and prescribing the course of instruction which shall be followed in it. The clergyman will have no difficulty in obtaining the ready consent of such a body to any plans which may be for the welfare of the school: for Sunday

school teachers are always glad to strengthen the hands of their pastor in every good word and work, and esteem him highly in love for his work's sake; while he will feel that in having the opinion and advice of active Christian labourers, whose hearts are filled with the desire to promote the welfare of the children committed to their care, he has the judgment of those who practically understand the wants of the Sunday school, and will do their best to supply them.

W. S.

TEACHERS' PRAYER UNION.

We have been so much encouraged by the way in which our invitation to our subscribers to unite in special prayer for God's blessing during the past year was received, that we have great pleasure in issuing, at the commencement of a New Year, a fresh appeal to our subscribers and friends, that they will unite together with us in making the Tuesday morning in each week a time for earnest, hearty prayer for the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit upon all who are fellow-workers with us in promoting the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, and especially for all in any way connected with Sunday schools.

We have appointed a particular subject for each day, in full reliance upon our blessed Saviour's promise, "That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven," Matt. xviii. 19, and would ask the co-operation of our many friends in circulating copies of the following list (which may be obtained free on application, by letter to the Editors, at the Offices of the Institute, 41, Ludgate Hill, E.C.) amongst their Christian friends, and inviting their co-operation in a plan which cannot fail to bring a rich blessing upon our Sunday schools.

Subjects for the First Quarter.

January 7.—*Our Queen and her Royal Family*, that the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, may sustain and support them under their present heavy affliction.

January 14.—*For the outpouring of the Holy Spirit*, as a Teacher and Intercessor, on all engaged in Sunday school work.

January 21.—*The Sunday School Institute*, that its officers may be endued with wisdom from on high, and that its publications may abound in Gospel truth.

January 28.—*The ministers of the Gospel*, that they may be faithful ambassadors for Christ, and may be made instrumental in saving very many souls.

February 4.—*All Superintendents*, that they may rule by love, with all discretion, in the fear of the Lord, and be examples to all.

February 11.—*All Sunday school Teachers*, that they may be faithful followers of Christ themselves, and, withal, apt to teach.

February 18.—*All Sunday Scholars*, that they may receive with meekness the engrafted word to the salvation of their souls.

February 25.—*The Parents and Families of our Sunday Scholars*, that they may all be made members of Christ, children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

March 4.—*Those who have passed from our Sunday schools into the world*, that they may continue Christ's faithful soldiers and servants unto their lives' end.

March 11.—*The due observance of the Sabbath*, that all men may turn from seeking their own pleasure and worldly gain therein, and may consecrate it to God's service.

March 18.—*The Church of Christ*, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may hold the faith in the unity of the Spirit.

March 25.—*The spread of the Gospel*, and especially, for all Missionaries, Scripture readers, Tract Distributors, and other lay-agents.

April 1.—*The Church of England*, that throughout it the Gospel of Christ may be faithfully preached, and the Sacraments duly administered.

THE BIBLE IN ITALY.

THE following report of an address delivered at the Ashford Branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society, by G. H. LAKE, Esq., of Kennington (who contributed a very interesting account of the Vaudois to this magazine a short time since) will be read with interest by all who are looking for the evangelization of Italy under the altered circumstances of that kingdom.

The speaker stated that all Christians were hoping and praying for the evangelization of Italy. He would consider therefore what answer had been given to these prayers, and what answer they might reasonably expect. Surely they would have no hesitation in saying that the means to be expected were—the Book and the Preacher. And in that order, too; — the Book first, and in due course the Evangelist to follow up the good work which the Book had begun. Persons unacquainted with the ignorance and superstition in which the Italian mind had been bound for centuries by the church of Rome, might suppose that there was nothing needed except a supply of evangelists to go forth and preach the word. But, even if a supply of evangelists had been ready to go forth, they could not have effected much on the minds of persons totally ignorant of Bible truth and Bible history. God had something better in store for Italy than converting her in her ignorance. He is converting her first from her ignorance by sending the Bible; and that, he trusted, would be followed up by the work of the evangelist. Friends asked him if it was true that Italy at large was breaking off from her illegiance to the Papacy and from superstition at the same time, or if only a few persons here and there were gathering themselves into congregations to worship God in spirit and in truth. To these enquiries he replied that the latter was the only fact which met the eye. There are such little bright specks dotted over the land, although they are still but few compared to the population. There are 22,000,000 of people in Italy. Turning to the number of evangelists there, he did not suppose there was one for each of these millions. They must

therefore see that it could not have been by the preacher alone, or chiefly, that any great work had been accomplished, if such were the case. But he could say that a great work—a work truly great, though preparatory—had been going on in Italy, by the introduction of the scriptures there, for many years past; and therefore, although these little congregations of converts are all that meet the eye, he considered that the readers of the bible in private are incalculable in number, on account of the great circulation of the scriptures. And whatever might be the motives which induced the people to read the scriptures—for they varied from real piety to mere curiosity or the use of the Bible as a political engine—still the fact remained that the Bible is read in Italy more than it ever was before. Then the good seed was sown in Italy, as in England, by means of the schools which had been set on foot; and in them, of course the holy scriptures were taught. His own journey to Italy was undertaken mainly to visit his friends there belonging to the celebrated Vaudois church, and to see the work which that church was doing beyond its own valley. That remarkable church had endured through persecution and suffering for ages, and had preserved the Bible and the faith of Christ; and its members feeling that the good hand of God had been upon them for a good and blessed end, desired to go forth and spread the Gospel throughout Italy. Accordingly, as soon as the war had liberated Tuscany, the Vaudois church sent forth some of its best men to Florence; and they transferred the theological college, which had existed heretofore at La Tour in the Vaudois valley, to that city. To Florence, accordingly, he (Mr. L.) directed his steps. Pisa was the first city at which he rested, and a very interesting old city it is, full of relics of ancient art and memorials of historic interest. But what of the Bible there? Walking through the streets, he came on a shop where Bibles, Testaments, and religious tracts were on sale; and in the open market place he encountered a colporteur, hawking Bibles on a tray. From Pisa he went to Florence, through the beautiful vale of the Arno, and in Florence he found those kind Vaudois friends whom he came to see, the professors of the theological college. There were at that time only nine students, for it had only been settled in September of last year. They had a congregation of about 200 at public worship on Sundays, and a congregation of about 80 attended two or three services which were held during the week. It was a remarkable circumstance that the gentleman who was then preaching to this congregation without let or hindrance, was exiled from Florence for doing so in 1849, when the Grand Duke was brought back by an Austrian army. Two other names of returned exiles from Florence would be recognised at once—Francesco and Rosa Madiai. He had the pleasure of shaking hands with old Francesco, at one of the evening meetings of the Italian Free Church, after the service. It was quite delightful to see the old man; he seemed so happy in witnessing the Word of God have free course, and feeling that in that he reaped the full reward of his imprisonment and persecutions. Mr. Lake then gave a very interesting account of the course of Bible exposition which took place at these evening meetings, which were chiefly composed of the labouring classes—the Protestant movement had hardly touched the middle classes yet. He related an account given him by an evangelist just returned from Perugia, a city which until lately formed part of the Papal States. In that city the greatest hatred and abhorrence existed against the Pope and the Roman priesthood, and it was said by the inhabitants that Protestantism must be planted there, if it were only to get rid of the social

evil of the confessional. It might have been supposed that Perugia, therefore, would have been an excellent field for the work of the evangelist; but, in fact, the contrary was the case—the higher classes were infidels, and the lower so steeped in ignorance, that the evangelist could make no impression on them. He could only get a congregation of nine or ten persons. But, about the same time, a colporteur came to that city, and sold between 500 or 600 Bibles or Testaments. Here was a fact for which the Bible Society might thank God and take courage. From Florence Mr. Lake went to Genoa,—passing through a beautiful country, but sadly dark in a religious sense. At Genoa he found depots for the sale of Bibles; he also heard addresses to congregations of Protestants—one of them by Dr. De Sanctis, who once was a parish priest in Rome, and a member of the (so-called) Holy Office, but who had now for some years been pastor of a Protestant congregation at Turin, from whence he removed to Genoa. It was a very touching sight to see this most able and learned man expounding the Scriptures to an assembly of poor people and children, all of whom were provided with Bibles. He was going to mention Milan; but as the work was only just began in that city he would pass on to Turin, where he arrived on June the 3rd, when the city was celebrating the festival of the constitution. There he found flourishing a Bible depot, and a printing press. There was also a large congregation of the free Italian Church, and an Evangelist presiding over it. From Turin he went into the Vaudois valleys. There, of course, the people had plenty of Bibles. They have had the Word of God for ages, and are now sending it forth into Italy. The motto of that Church has always been, "The light shineth in darkness." It did not therefore come within the scope of his remarks that evening to speak of the people of these valleys. Mr. Lake supposed, after he had turned homewards from Italy, he had seen all there was to see of the work he came to witness; but he found a work going on in Switzerland among the Italian laborers employed in constructing the railways in that country, which could not fail of greatly benefiting Italy, as these laborers would carry the Truth with them upon returning to their homes. These Italian navvies he described as being far from the brutalized characters so often met with in men of that class, but of humane and teachable dispositions, most assiduous readers of the Bible, and prayerful men. Mr. Lake gave a very interesting account of their habits; and observed that as they were very often changing their abodes, and returning to their homes in Italy, a most important opening was offered by their means for the spread of the word of God there. He also noticed as a singular fact that the Jews had been instrumental in circulating the Bible in Italy; which they did because they saw that it was antagonistic to the Romish Church, which had ever oppressed them. In conclusion, he said he looked upon the work as having progressed in Italy to the extent of having raised a spirit of enquiry concerning the truth; similar to that of the Man of Ethiopia, of whom it is recorded that sitting in his chariot and reading the Prophet Esaias, he asked, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" And he trusted that it would be the will of God that his Evangelists should now go forth to the Italian people at large, and begin at the same Scripture, and preach unto them Jesus.—*(Extracted from the Kentish Express and Ashford News. November* 30, 1861.)

Sunday School Institute.

QUARTERLY RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

The usual Quarterly

DEVOTIONAL MEETING

of the Members of the Society, was held at the rooms of the Institute, on Tuesday evening, the 8th of October, 1861, to seek the Divine blessing upon the special work in which the Society is engaged. The exposition of a portion of Scripture, and the offering of prayers, were conducted, as usual, by the Rev. EDWARD AURIOL, M.A., Rector of St. Dunstan's, Fleet Street.

A SOCIAL MEETING

of the Members of the Society, was held on Monday the 21st of October, 1861, when a very large number of Teachers assembled, despite the unfavourable state of the weather; and a feeling of kindly sympathy and interest in the work, seemed to create a bond of union among all present, which fully realized the object of the Meeting. After tea, the Rev. H. J. ADAMSON, Curate of St. Andrew's, Holborn, took the chair. The subject for consideration, was, "The Social Influences of the Sunday School," which was opened by one of the Secretaries, Mr. SANDBY, who after pointing out the bond of union which existed among Sunday School Teachers, from being engaged in work for Christ, their aim and purpose, their strength and dependence the same, proceeded to dwell upon the social influences of the Sunday School between the teachers and the clergy—teachers among themselves — and teachers towards their scholars; pointing out on the first point, the aid and sympathy which the laity might thus afford to the clergy in their work; on the second, the social advantage of Christians of different ranks in society and various degrees of ability, meeting together on a ground of mutual interest, and the good effected by the friendships formed among Sunday School Teachers; and in reference to the third point, suggesting the useful influence upon the poor of the proofs thus given of the care and sympathy, and self-denial, of those richer than themselves, in caring for their children, watching over their interests, visiting them in their homes, and giving up their own ease and comfort to do them good. While by the admixture of the children of the poor with those above them, the roughness and rudeness of their untutored manners were removed, and the imitation of their teachers made them gentle, and engendered self-respect; and thus, by breaking down the partition walls between rich and poor, the Sunday School Teacher became a patriot, influencing society at large, by applying to its largest section, the humanizing influences of the Gospel of Christ.

An interesting and animated conversation followed, in which several of the plans of usefulness by which this social influence of the Sunday School might be practically applied, were discussed—parents' meetings, school treats, old scholar's meetings, &c. In this, Messrs. Jarvis, Griffith, May, Tucker, Wall, Reid, and Heald, took part.

A course of

TRAINING LESSONS

has been delivered at the rooms of the Institute, as follows:—

October 28. "The Parable of the Unjust Steward," (Luke xvi. 1—13), to a Testament class, by Mr. NORTON.

November 11. "The Cure of the Ruler's Son at Capernaum," (John iv. 46—53), to an Elementary class, by Mr. HEALD.

November 25.—"Jesus in the Synagogue of Nazareth," (Luke iv. 16—32), to a Bible class, by Mr. S. B. POWER.

And, to illustrate the series of lessons on the Liturgy, proposed for Bible classes in the present year, a

SPECIMEN LESSON

on one of the subjects contained in that series was given on Monday Evening, 9th December, by Mr. NORTON.

The usual quarterly

SUPERINTENDENTS' CONVERSATIONAL MEETING

was held on the 16th of December, when the subject selected for consideration was 'The inefficient Teacher.'

The following are the

NEW PUBLICATIONS

of the Society which have been issued for the current year:—

A SUNDAY'S SCHOLAR'S ALMANAC.

(Price One Penny,) containing, in addition to the information usually found in an Almanac, a Text for every Day in the Year bearing upon the Collect for the following Sunday, and various courses of Reading and Learning Lessons adapted to Bible, Testament, and Elementary Classes.

"AFTER THE DEER."

A New Year's Address to Sunday Scholars, by the Rev. JAMES BOLTON.

"THE WAX AND THE SEAL."

A New Year's Address to Sunday School Teachers, by the Rev. P. B. POWER.

A NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS

to the Parents of our Sunday Scholars, by J. G. FLEET, ESQ.

THE COMMITTEE OF THE INSTITUTE have made a great REDUCTION in the Prices of their various Class Registers, Roll Books, Elementary Tablets, Lesson Papers, Liturgies, &c.; and they trust it will be productive of a large increase in the Sale of the Publications of the Society.

Specimen and Descriptive Catalogues of the several Publications of the Institute, embracing all the necessary Superintendents' and Teachers' Registers, Series of Lessons prepared expressly to suit the several grades of Bible, Testament, and Elementary Classes in Sunday Schools, Explanatory Notes for Teachers to accompany each course of Lessons, Tracts on various Sunday School Subjects, Hymn Books, etc., etc., may be obtained free on application, personally, or by letter to the Depositary, at the offices of the Institute, 41, LUDGATE HILL, LONDON.

In the suburbs of London a series of Training Lessons has been delivered at

ST. JOHN'S HOLLOWAY:

on December 6th, by Mr. HEALD, to an Elementary Class: Elisha and the Shunamite. 2 Kings iv.

On December 12th, by Mr. NORTON, to a Bible Class: The General Confession.

On December 20th, by Mr. REID, to a Testament Class: 'Jesus walking on the sea.' Luke xiv. 22—33.

And arrangements have been made for the delivery of a Course of *Lectures to Senior Scholars* at

ST. MARK'S, TOLLINGTON PARK,

on the following Friday Evenings:—

3rd January. On the Life and Travels of St. Paul, by J. F. REID, Esq.

17th January. On the early Christians, and the Catacombs of Rome, by WM. SANDBY, Esq.

31st January. (Subject not fixed).

A NEW YEAR'S SERVICE

for Sunday School Teachers, to be followed by the administration of the Holy Communion, will be held on Thursday Evening, the 2nd January, at St. ANDREW'S, HOLBORN. The Sermon on the occasion will be preached by the Rev. HENRY BLUNT, M.A.,

Rector. The Service will commence at seven o'clock.

THE LIBRARY

for the use of the members has been increased by the addition of the following works :—

The Light of Life, by Miss Charlesworth.

Bible Text Cyclopædia, by Inglis.

Lectures to the Young Men's Christian Association, for 1860-1.

Life Work, or the Link and the Rivet, by L. N. R.

Scenes of Life, by the Rev. J. Baillie.

The Spiritual Life, by the Rev. Thomas Griffiths.

Footprints of the Creator, by the late Hugh Miller.

Woman's Service on the Lord's Day, by the Author of England's Daybreak.

THE SPECIAL FUND

has not yet reached, as we had hoped it might, the minimum of £1000, upon the condition of which amount being raised, most of those friends who first encouraged us to make the effort, promised their liberal contributions. We still urgently appeal for the aid we need in carrying on the good work of improving and extending the religious education of the poor through the medium of our Sunday schools, trusting that the Divine blessing will attend our efforts in this portion of the Lord's vineyard.

The following additions to the Fund are gratefully acknowledged :—

	£	s.	d.
Amount announced in our last number	567	5	0
Sum promised by the Committee	200	0	0
Archbishop of Canterbury	5	0	0
Bishop of Winchester	5	0	0
Duke of Marlborough	5	0	0
R. C. L. Bevan, Esq.	10	10	0
C. J. Bevan, Esq.	25	0	0
Friends at Manchester	52	0	0
A Friend, per Mr. Sandby	5	0	0
F. Martin, Esq. „	5	0	0
R. Barker, Esq. „	10	0	0
Rev. W. H. Bathurst	5	0	0
M. Gladstone, Esq.	5	0	0
Sundry small dons.	10	0	0

The Committee thankfully acknowledge the receipt of the following additions to the General Funds of the Society, during the past quarter :—

DONATIONS.

	£	s.	d.
A 3	1	0	0
Mrs. Frewer	0	5	0
Rev. H. Linton	5	0	0
B. Claypon, Esq.	5	0	0
R. D.	0	1	0
Colonel Wigram	5	5	0
Mr. Osborn	3	3	0
R. Hemman, Esq.	0	15	0
Mrs. Rice	0	2	6

NEW ANNUAL SUBSCRIBERS.

Miss Hind	0	5	0
Rev. R. E. Roberts	0	10	6
S. C.	0	2	6
Gen. Hon. Thos. Ashburnham	1	1	0
Col. Wigram	1	1	0
Rev. C. C. Layard	0	10	6
Mr. C. Lawson	0	5	0
Rev. W. B. Hayne	1	1	0
Rev. J. R. Tyre	0	10	6
Miss Edwards	0	10	0

NEW SUBSCRIBING SCHOOLS.

Nympsfield	0	10	6
West Fordington	0	10	6
St. Barnabas, Homerton	0	10	6
St. James's, Wednesbury	0	10	6

Notices to Correspondents.

Contributions are thankfully acknowledged from "Rana;" Rev. G. N. S.; "Dora;" J. M C.;" J. G. F.; W. S.; Rev. H. J. B.

Our friends are requested kindly to send Articles intended for insertion in the next number as early in the quarter as possible—not *later* than the end of February.

With this number a new volume is commenced, printed in new type, and on better paper; while it is hoped the contents will be found both interesting and useful to those engaged in the blessed work of Sunday School teaching; may we, in return for our renewed efforts, solicit from our friends an endeavour on their part to increase the circulation of our Magazine?

THE DEATH OF THE PRINCE CONSORT.

THE sudden and lamented death of H. R. H. PRINCE ALBERT, the beloved Consort of the QUEEN, has cast the dark shadow of mourning, not only over the widowed household of the Sovereign and the home of her now fatherless children, but over the whole land, in which the Prince whom it has pleased God to remove from among us in the fulness of his physical strength and intellectual energy, was universally honoured for his many noble qualities of heart and mind.

On the Sunday morning (15th December, 1861) on which the news spread that the Prince had died during the preceding night, how many thousands of worshippers in our churches, of Sunday school teachers and Sunday scholars, were bowed down in awe, and deep solemn earnestness before the throne of Mercy to beseech God to look graciously upon our beloved Queen, to enable her to bear the severe affliction with which He had visited her! and how universal was the sympathy with which every heart in England turned to its Sovereign in her bereavement, and offered up intercessions for her and her royal children! All felt that a sorrow had come upon themselves, and though it could not be expressed in the ear of the Chief Mourners, every one was conscious that the Queen's loss was shared by all her subjects.

Nor can we fail to see the reason for this wide-spread and heartfelt regret. It was natural, as we love and honour the Queen so highly for her gracious rule over us, and her bright example to all her subjects, that her sorrow should in a measure be our own: but more than this, we feel that in the illustrious personage who has departed, we have not only lost a Prince but a benefactor to our country, and an influence for good which cannot be replaced. It is not for us to speak of the pattern he set of the husband and the father—of the purity and integrity of his whole life—of the modest and unostentatious demeanour of him who was so active and energetic, so useful and so valuable in promoting and suggesting the many means which have been brought into operation under his guidance, for the social, moral, and intellectual advancement of our people. Art, science, and literature have all lost a master-spirit, as well as a patron: education and charity have lost one of their noblest patrons and examples. But beyond the high intellectual powers which he displayed, was a deep, unuttered feeling of simple piety; now and then showing itself, but from the natural retiring nature of the good Christian, kept down rather than displayed. The regular attendance of the Prince at Divine Service, his presence and his addresses at meetings for promoting missions to the heathen, the education of the people, their social improvement, and other means of active philanthropy, and his constant habit of recognising the hand of God in all things,—sufficiently indicate the religious spirit in which he laboured. The motto which the Great Exhibition of 1851 bore upon its Catalogue, was selected by him, for he was the originator and principal director of all its parts. That inscription was, "The earth is the Lord's and all that therein is: the compass of the world and they that dwell therein." Beside this scriptural dedication of that wondrous gathering to God, there was another akin to it:—"The progress of the human race resulting from the common labour of all men ought to be the final object of the exertion of each individual. In promoting this end, we are accomplishing the will of the great and blessed God."

In the same noble spirit was the Prince preparing the plan of this year's International Exhibition when his career was so suddenly closed,—but not we are sure before his work was done, although we had hoped it might have been prolonged; and now we may say of him as of every other faithful servant of the Most High, "He doth rest from his labours and his works do follow him." May the influence of his example remain upon those royal children to whom he was the best of fathers, and upon the people of the country of his adoption! and may God in His mercy bless and defend our beloved Queen, sustaining her in all her trials and difficulties, granting her the consoling presence of the Comforter in her great bereavement, sending the Holy Dove of Peace to rest upon her soul, her family, and her country, and in the end reserving for her, the Crown of Everlasting Life!

Church of England

SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY

MAGAZINE.

1ST APRIL, 1862.

The Teacher in his Closet.

A HANDFUL OF CORN FROM OLD FIELDS.

THE BIBLE.

I CONFESS that the majesty of the Scriptures, and the holiness of the Gospel greatly affects me. View the books of the philosophers with all their pomp, how little do they appear, placed beside this. Is it possible that a book at once so sublime and simple can be the work of men? Is it possible that He whose history it records, can be but a mere man? Does He speak in the tone of an enthusiast or of an ambitious sectary? What mildness, what purity in his manners! what persuasive grace in his instructions, what elevation in his maxims, what profound wisdom in his discourses, what presence of mind, what ingenuity, what justness in his answers, what empire over his passions! Where is the man, where is the sage, who knows how to act, to suffer and to die, without weakness and without ostentation?

Rousseau.

When I call to mind at last, after many dark ages wherein the huge overshadowing train of error had almost swept all the stars out of the firmament of the Church, how the bright and blissful Reformation by divine power stood through the black and settled night of ignorance and anti-christian tyranny, methought a sovereign and reviving joy must needs rush into the bosom of him, who hears or reads, and the sweet odour of the returning Gospel imbathe his soul with the fragrancy of heaven.

Then was the Bible sought out of dusty corners where profane falsehood and neglect had thrown it; the schools opened; divine and human learning raked out of the embers of forgotten tongues; the princes and cities trooping apace to the new erected banner of salvation; the martyrs with the irresistible might of weakness, shaking the powers of darkness, and scorning the fiery rage of the old red Dragon.

Milton.

The historical evidences of Christianity are abundantly sufficient to satisfy the scrutinizing researches of the learned, and are within the each of all well-educated persons. But the internal evidence of the Truth lies within the grasp of every sincere enquirer. Every man who reads his Bible, and compares what it says of mankind, with the records of his own experience—every man who marks the adaptation of its mighty system of doctrine to his own spiritual need as a sinner in the sight of God, is furnished with practical proof of the divine origin of our religion. I love this evidence. It is what I call the ***portable evidence of Christianity.***

Chalmers.

I admit and maintain that the Holy Scripture can never depart from what is true, provided we take it in its true and germane sense; but no one will deny that this often lies deep, and is a good deal removed from the bald signification of the words. If any one think it is always to be understood according to the letter, he will not only run into error, but he will impute to Holy Scripture numerous contradictions, propositions palpably untrue, even heresies and blasphemies. He would be obliged to ascribe to God, feet, hands, and eyes, and human properties and accidents, both bodily and mental, such as anger, repentance, hatred, forgetfulness of the past, and ignorance of the future. Propositions of this kind have been in this manner expressed by the sacred writers by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, in order to accommodate divine truths to the capacity of the uncultivated and ignorant mass of mankind. It is therefore the

duty of competent and diligent expositors to bring forth in every instance the true meaning, and to explain the ground and reason of their having been expressed in the words which are represented to us.

Galileo.

A TRADITION OF THE VAUDOIS.

"Oh! lady fair, these silks of mine,
Are beautiful and rare—
The richest web of the Indian loom,
Which beauty's self might wear.
And these pearls are pure, and fair to behold,
And with radiant light they vie,
I have brought them with me a weary way—
Will my gentle lady buy?"

And the lady smiled on the worn old man,
Through the dark and clustering curls
Which veiled her brow, as she stooped to view
His silks and glittering pearls.
And she placed the price in the old man's hand,
Then lightly turned away;
But she paused at the wanderer's earnest call—
"Stay, gentle lady, stay!

"Oh, lady fair, I have yet a gem,
Which a purer lustre flings
Than the diamond flash of the jewelled crown,
On the lofty brow of kings.
A wonderful pearl of exceeding price,
Whose virtue shall not decay—
Whose light shall be, as a spell to thee,
And a blessing on thy way."

The lady glanced at the mirroring steel,
Where her youthful form was seen,—
Where her eyes shone clear, and her dark locks wave,
Their clasping pearls between:—
"Bring forth thy pearl of exceeding worth,
Thou traveller grey and old;
And name the price of thy precious gem,
And my page shall count the gold."

And the cloud went off from the pilgrim's brow,
As a small and meagre book,
Unchased by gold or diamond gem,
From his folding robe he took:—
"Here lady fair is the pearl of price—
May it prove as such to thee!
Nay, keep thy gold, I ask it not,—
For the Word of God is free."

The hoary traveller went his way—
But the gift he left behind
Hath done its pure and perfect work
In the high-born maiden's mind:
For she hath turned from the pride of sin
To the loveliness of truth,
And given her wavering heart to God,
In the beauteous hour of youth!

M.S.

Let us take a view how the scripture expresses the most noted of the passions of the soul. And here what poetry ever paralleled Solomon in his description of love, as to all the ways, effects, and ecstacies, and little tyrannies of that commanding passion? "Love is strong as death, and jealousy cruel as the grave." And then for his descriptions of beauty, he describes that, so that he even transcribes it into her expressions. And where do we read such strange risings and fallings, now the faintings and languishings, now the terrors and astonishments of despair, venting themselves in such high amazing strains as the Psalms? Or where did we ever find sorrow flowing forth in such natural prevailing pathos, as in the lamentations of Jeremy? One would think that every letter was wrote with a tear, every word was the noise of a breaking heart—that the author was a man compacted of sorrows, disciplined to grief from his infancy; one who never breathed but in sighs, nor spoke but in a groan. So that the politician, who said he would not read the Scripture for fear of spoiling his style, shewed himself as much a blockhead, as an atheist.

South.

The ancient sayings of the Greeks were neat, pithy, and sententious, and the Delphian oracles more than sufficiently mystic. But where, elsewhere, is to be found that extraordinary union of the grand and the beautiful, of the terrible, the simple, the argumentative, and the pathetic, which the books of the Old and New Testament perpetually exhibit? In these strange and inspired writings, we may contemplate the perfections of almost every style, from the plain phraseology of the ancient patriarch to the sounding denunciations of the prophets—from the sublime story of creation, to the frenzied lamentations of Jeremiah, and the cloudy revelations of the times to come. The style of the Old Testament is essentially Oriental. It has more of detail, and occasionally more simplicity indeed than what is generally attributed to Eastern writers; but otherwise it is ample, sonorous, picturesque, and awful; glittering with innumerable similes, and enlisting into its service, every plant of the

earth, and every wind of Heaven; the mountains and their offspring, the ocean and its brood, the leviathan, the mammoth, the fox, the wolf, and the lion; the cedars of Libanus, and the pictured palm, the rose, the lily, the ruby, the beryl, and the amethyst; the soaring eagle, and the home-returning dove; in a word, every thing which the wonderful prodigality of nature offered, was accepted without hesitation, and used without stint, for the purpose of enriching the marvellous history of man. There was nothing ascetic in the dispositions of the writers, and there is consequently, no niggardliness or poverty in their verse.

The different parts of the Bible pass by us, like a succession of distinct panoramas. Its figures and metaphors (if they have occasionally a little sameness) are almost always sparkling and beautiful; and its words are like those of an oracle. It is as though we listened to the music of a pleasant river, or the voice of a mighty ocean on the sounding shore,—to a tempest in its anger, or a mother lamenting by her child.

Its stories of remorse, and exile, its pictures of Eastern manners, its cedars and cypresses, its burning sands, its stately palaces, ceiled with the fir tree, and overlaid with amethysts and gold, its courts, and armies, its pastoral tents and fountains of waters in the wilderness, can never be forgotten. There is a pomp in its diction which never loses its importance, a freshness and beauty in its images from which we never turn aside. Its names even (read in our childhood) carry with them a vague grandeur into our imaginations, and become invested with a patriarchal dignity, or with a state and princely splendour, which nothing of later times produces. We remember when our ears first thrilled with admiration before these things, and our spirits bowed down within us. The old enchantment still prevails, and all is as awful and as grand as ever. There are still glimpses in our memory, of "Nimrod, the mighty hunter," —and the star-soaring towers of Babel—the desolate Hagar,—the true and gentle Ruth,—Egyptian Pharoah, and his host,—the stern lawgiver Moses,—Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian prince, struck prone for his impiety,—Joshua, who checked the sun and moon in their course in the valley of Ajalon,—Daniel, who alone could read the awful writing on the wall,—Jonathan, the son of Saul, (over whom David lamented so sweetly), the terrible witch of Endor, who "*saw gods ascending out of the earth*,"—the glittering visions of Ezekiel,—the epic grandeur of Isaiah,—the sadness of Jeremiah,—the wisdom of Solomon,—and Job, tempered in the winter of adversity, who died old and full of days, perhaps the sublimest of them all.

There is nothing in Homer, which can match with the soaring

spirit of its poetry; there is nothing in Virgil which can equal the gentle pathos of its strains: Dante is less awful, and Ariosto less wild. Even Milton, who has topped the sublimity of all other writers, and Shakespear, who has surpassed the united world in prodigality of imagery and variety of thought, must yield to the infinite grandeur and beauty which is impressed on the prophetic oracles of the Hebrew writings, or scattered almost at random over its many stories. Were it but the ruin of a history, it would be venerable, were it a fiction only, it would be a grand one. But it is complete and true,—it is addressed to *ourselves*, it is connected with us and our well-being, it gives us a story of the past, and a lesson for the future.

Retrospective Review.

The literal meaning of Scripture is the whole foundation of faith, the only thing that stands its ground in distress and temptation.

Luther.

I hold it a most infallible rule in exposition of sacred Scripture, that where a literal construction will stand, the furthest from the letter is commonly the worst.

Hooker.

Thus much must be confessed, that the Scriptures being given by inspiration, and not by human reason, do differ from all other books, in the Author, which by consequence doth draw on some difference to be used by the expositor. For the Inditer of them did know four things, which no man attains to know; which are—the mysteries of the kingdom of glory, the perfections of the laws of nature, the secrets of the heart of man, and the future succession of all ages.

Bacon, Advancement of Learning.

"SOMETHING FOR CHRIST."

A FEW days ago I met with a young woman who was once a Sunday scholar in my class. Circumstances had removed her for some years from my immediate observation, but the welcome I received was warm and grateful.

In the course of our conversation she remarked that she herself taught in a Sunday-school now. To the inquiry whether she liked the work, she replied, "More than I did at first: I do not think I am naturally fond of teaching, but," she added, the colour mounting to her fair clear brow, "*I wanted to do something for Christ.*"

Something for Christ;—how in these words speaks out a living faith, a faith that makes Christ known as a reality, a power, a presence. I cannot wish to do something for an abstraction, it must be a living person who excites such a desire. But let me know Christ by faith, as my atoning Priest, my teaching Prophet, my coming King; let me have fellowship with Him as my Brother, Shepherd, Friend, and Guide; let me realize the thought that He has pitied, pardoned, loved, yea, loves me still, and surely I must have a faint desire, if not a fervent longing, to do "something for Christ."

Something for Christ,—He knows better than we do what that something shall be. To one it is a work lowly and unobserved, to another, a sphere of labour in itself distasteful; one may seem to bear the burden and heat of the day, and yet have to cry, "I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought;" another may have the privilege once and again of, as it were, "returning, bringing his sheaves with him." But whether our work lies bright in the sunlight, or deep in the shade; whether it is open to observation, or unseen on the falling dew; whether it be the pleasant effort in which we exercise our gift, or the laborious exertion, which owes all to the motive; let this be at least its deepest source, its living energy,—it is "something for Christ."

"*For Christ,*"—how the thought nerves the soul for labours more abundant, for sufferings abounding also. See the missionary's wife parting with children dear to her as her very life, and as the receding ship bears them from her side, hear the whispered, tearful words, 'Jesus, I do this for thee.' Oh, would you have a motive which shall never fail, a spring of action which shall never tire, an inward force which no external circumstance can weaken, then must love to Jesus be the principle which stirs your actions, and filled with this love it will be felt at once your honour and your happiness to do "*something for Christ.*"

Is it pleasant to do something for those who *love us?* whose love can compare with that of Christ? "From everlasting to everlasting," it is high as heaven, deep as the sea, it has in it all the power of Godhead, and the sympathy and tenderness of one born of woman. Is it joy to do something for those *we love?* is love ever going out in action, always struggling to express itself? then how is this feeling of our nature intensified and purified, when the heart loves Christ, and longs to do *something for Him.*

Oh, dear friends, let us watch against the paralyzing influence of constantly repeated acts, even of worship, and still more of work, without ever new supplies of motive power and life from above. It is so easy to fall into a round of duties and engagements, to go through them almost mechanically, and to make them the substitute for, rather than the expression of, the deep inner life of faith and love. Let us ask ourselves day by day, 'What am I doing for Christ? is it really for Him? is his honour, his name, his love, his glory, that which I aim at, conciously and simply?' Oh, must we not sometimes look back on a day of much outward activity, and sorrowfully confess 'of all that I did, there was *nothing for Christ*.'

G. B. H.

SUNDAYS.

Bright shadows of true rest! some shoots of bliss;
Heaven once a week;
The next world's gladness pre-possessed in this;
A day to seek;
Eternity in time; the steps by which
We climb above all ages; lamps that light
Man through his heap of dark days; and the rich
And full redemption of the whole week's flight:

The pulleys unto head-long man; time's bower;
The narrow way;
Transplanted paradise; God's walking hour;
The cool o' th' day;
The creatures' jubilee; God's parle with dust;
Heaven here; man on those hills of myrrh and flowers;
Angels descending; the return of trust;
A gleam of glory after six days' showers:

The Church's love feasts; time's prerogative
And interest,
Deducted from the whole: the combs and hive
And home of rest;
The milky way chalked out with suns; a clue
That guides through erring hours, and in full story
A taste of heaven on earth; the pledge and cue
Of a full feast, and the out-courts of glory.

Henry Vaughan, A.D. 1614—1695.

FLOWERS.

One morning, on being shown into a friend's drawing room, I was struck with its gloomy appearance, and yet could not at first discover the cause: it was a bright sunny morning, the blinds were up, chairs and tables occupied their usual places, and a cheerful fire enlivened the hearth; I was exceedingly puzzled; when my friend entered, and, after the usual greeting, exclaimed: "Does not the room look wretched! It underwent a grand cleaning yesterday, and the china and other ornaments are not yet replaced." This explained all, but I could not forbear acknowledging, that I had no idea the many useless articles could make so much difference.

So it is with nature—rob her of *her* ornaments, and just such a blank will appear. I ask the reader to imagine the sky, devoid of colour, and the sun of bright rays, the air unburdened with song, the earth not decked with flowers, and the arts of painting, music, etc,, unknown. Man could indeed exist without all these in peace and comparative comfort, but it would, as far as the senses go, be a stern, joyless existence.

It might have been the will of the Almighty that, on Adam's fall, the world should become a gloomy wilderness, and mankind be doomed to pass the time of probation in cheerless labour, while bidden to learn the (to stubborn hearts) difficult lesson of faith, obedience and love. Had it been thus ordained, no murmur would be justified in creatures, whose very life is an act of grace, and whose daily food, an undeserved supply. There are a few in whose morbid minds the thought may perhaps arise, that, were such really the case, temptations would be less, and the way to heaven smoother; —they are clearly wrong, for it is the abuse, not the use of God's gifts which hinders; and to deprive man of temptation would be to allot him a passive, instead of an active faith.

In perusing the different letters, (published in some of the Sunday School Monthly Magazines), on "Innocent Worldly Amusements," I felt that not one writer had quite settled the point at issue. To begin with, I believe, the fact was not mooted, that, where position or age differs, what for one may be innocent, might be highly improper for another; yet there *are* innocent worldly amusements, befitting *each* rank and time of life; and much to be condemned are they who would seek to deprive any of their quota of lawful enjoyment. A beautiful and apt answer to the whole question is given in the following well-known lines:

"Few rightly estimate the worth
Of joys that spring and fade on earth:
They are not weeds we should despise,
They are not plants of Paradise;
But wild flowers in the Christian's way
To cheer, but not protract his stay;
Which he dares not too fondly clasp,
Lest they should perish in his grasp;
But yet may view, and wisely love,
As proofs and types of joys above."

Although millions among the children of men are shut out, by circumstances, from every recreation in which others delight, the Father's love is none the less displayed to them; He cheers the hearts of his seemingly forlorn children in ways often little known to those whose minds are set on other things. For them most especially are laid out, like plainly written books, the rich ornaments of nature, marvellous in splendour, in magnitude, and in variety; from the widely spread mountain-scenery, and the wonderful Aurora Borealis, to the gems brought to light from the ocean, and the little tufts of green moss on the river's bank. Still, just as nought but the aid of the Holy Spirit can enable us to mix blameless with the world, and share unharmed its fleeting pleasures, while following the leading of God's providence; so, only by the teaching of the same Spirit, are we prevented from blindly misinterpreting these books of nature. (See Rom. i. 18—25).

David, who, while tending his flocks, spent much of his early life in the contemplation of God's works, was constrained to exclaim in accents of humility and adoration, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained; what is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that Thou visitest him?" Ps. viii. 3, 4. The same subject engrossed the thoughts of Israel's "sweet psalmist," when he composed the first part of the nineteenth Psalm: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

Yes, indeed, messages from the great Creator are conveyed in all his works; but it is a wonderful proof of Infinite Goodness, that although Power and Majesty are thundered forth in the awful language of the stupendous cataract, the mighty volcano, the overwhelming whirlwind, and the terrific storm, such fearful witnesses are rare, while the winning voice of love is continually heard from the sweet flowers that spring up wherever man fixes his dwelling.

Our Lord drew his disciples' attention to it, when he bade them "consider the lilies of the field," and believe that if God's care is displayed in clothing such fragile blossoms with beauty, unsurpassed by all the magnificence of Solomon's apparel, so much the more readily will He provide with all things needful, his own children who trust with untroubled minds in Him.

Many of our Sunday Scholars (aye and some of their teachers too), expend their best efforts in anxious endeavours to provide food and raiment for their perishing bodies, while their immortal souls have but a remnant of their care; to them Jesus says: "Your Father *knoweth* that ye have need of these things; but seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Dear reader, praise God for the flowers, and whenever your scholars, in the warmth of their young hearts, bring you sweet tokens of their affection, culled from sunny banks, shady woods, or from their own cherished cottage-gardens; think on the words of Jesus; and lead the children's thoughts to dwell with gratitude on the assurance of our Father's tender care, stamped in the beauty of each tiny blossom.

Rana.

THE TEACHER'S EXEMPLAR.

Whatever our employment or pursuit, as Christians, whether in the ordinary business of daily life, in the quiet occupators of home, or in the more active duties of a public career, it is always good and profitable for us to be "looking unto Jesus," not only for grace and strength, but as our great Exemplar, in order that we may learn of Him how to fulfil the particular duties which fall to our lot in life; and that, as far as possible, we may be like unto Him in the spirit in which we fulfil them, as well as imitators of Him in our outward actions.

As Sunday school teachers, then, it is well for us often to look at our Divine Master as our example in teaching; and although his character is so high and exalted, that our weak and debased minds cannot attain to the apprehension of the holiness of his motives, nor the excellency of his actions, yet may we, by God's help, learn something of that spirit of wisdom, and that wondrous influence over those around Him, which led even his enemies to acknowledge that "never man spake as this man," and to feel that "He taught them as one having authority."

The office of a teacher, in any department of learning or art, is at all times an important one; he or she it is who moulds the mind, develops the faculties, directs the tastes, corrects the errors, and guides the dawnings of genius towards the truths or the arts upon which they are to be exercised. The simple schoolmaster, who fulfils his office aright, if he does not gain the reverence among his fellows which his work deserves, at least has the satisfaction of knowing in his own mind that he is doing that for his scholars which will be of the highest importance and value to them in their after life.

If, however, we look to our Lord's teaching, we find all the best characteristics of human instruction displayed in their highest and noblest form, and carried to their proper end; whereas, the great fault of all human systems is, that however good each part may be in itself, it wants the final aim, which alone can make it of real value to mankind. Christ taught men what they were in themselves —to know their own nature, its origin, its fall, its means of restoration, and its final destiny; He showed them also their relationship to God their Creator; and thus revealed to them the powers of their inner being, pointing out the high aspirations of which the human soul is capable, its ability to ascend even to the apprehension of its Maker, as far as He is pleased to reveal Himself, and his intention that throughout eternity it should make progress to greater perfection in a perpetual growth.

In the teaching of Jesus there was a superiority to all who had gone before Him, both in the subject and the comprehensiveness of his instruction. The best of the great minds of ancient times never attained to *all* they sought—something was weak or dark, something attempted beyond their reach, something left obscure. Indeed, it is so still, in all who have not received Christ as *their* instructor; since, in such teachers of art or science, in poetry or music, we so often find the tendency to mar what is beautiful and true by the introduction of some base or corrupting emotion of the mind.

Christ was "the truth" in Himself, knowing the mind of God, and desiring to reveal it, as far as men could receive it, for their good. None ever taught before, none have ever since taught as He did. Wisdom dwelt in Him, and therefore is He called "Wonderful, Counsellor." In the voice and manner of our Lord, in the heartfelt earnestness of his address, in the gentleness He displayed towards the ignorant, in the forbearance He exercised towards the obstinate and contradictory opponents of the truth, in the exact adaptation of the manner of communicating what He desired to teach to the capacity of his hearers, in his readiness to explain that which they

did not understand, and in reading their hearts, learning their doubts, and removing their objections—all these characteristics of his teaching no doubt gave to his addresses a power which the reported substance of them, as given by the Evangelists (wondrous as even their words are), cannot impart with the same marvellous charm as the audible sounds of that voice which melted the stony heart, drove the evil spirits from their receptacles, stilled the wind and the storm, and awoke the dead.

But if we desire to fulfil the end He had in view in speaking to those around Him—the healing of their souls,—He has Himself provided us with the means of doing so, by giving us the Holy Spirit to quicken his words written in the Gospels, and to give them all the living efficacy of his own Divine voice. Thus we, as his disciples, may be led into all truth—the things of Christ will be shown unto us—and his word, spoken by our lips, may be so blessed that they shall not return unto Him void. But let us speak them with somewhat of the same single eye to his Father's glory, the same gentleness and pity for the ignorance and prejudice of others, the same unprovoked spirit, the same love as He did—then may we hope that, in some measure, we may carry on the work which He begun on earth, as the Great Teacher of mankind, and left as a charge to his people to complete.

It is the real presence of Christ which is the life of religion, and the source of all real value in religious teaching. It enables us not only to discover the beauties of the style of the Bible, and the wisdom of the truths it contains, but much more—it makes us feel their power in our hearts. Outward forms may touch the senses, and bring them under the influence of religious restraint; but they fail to melt the stony heart, they do not quicken the dead soul, or remove its corruption, or change its tastes and tendencies. Jesus is still to us the same gentle, loving, patient Teacher He was while on earth, though He is now on his throne in heaven; and if we seek Him humbly and earnestly, He will let us sit at his feet and learn his word, to the enlightening of our own souls, and will also guide us so to teach others that they, too, may feel that He is, indeed, a Teacher come from God, and accept Him as their Saviour, "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

M. S.

RETIREMENT.

THE cultivation of a habit of retirement is, to the Sunday-school teacher, of the highest consideration and moment. The truly diligent teacher will feel deeply the necessity for retirement and study, as well as activity in his class; not only for the digestion of the subject matter of his teaching, but also for habitual communion with God.

Retirement for prayer is important to the teacher, first, because it enables him to bring forth to the souls committed to his care, spiritual nourishment, which the teaching of the Holy Spirit of God has opened to his own soul. Daily prayer and study are the means whereby the humblest teacher's instruction will become efficient, and daily neglect of retirement will paralyze the efforts of the most powerful teacher. Retired prayer is the foundation, the sap, and the spirit of all efficient teaching; and a constant panting for such communion with God is one of the surest indications of sincerity. Without the exercise of prayer, a teacher is useless, nay, worse than useless. Teaching, without the unction obtained in communion with God, must be only like "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal;" retirement for prayer is the means whereby the teacher obtains spiritual nourishment and influence for his holy work. It is the medium of receiving spiritual communications for the right instruction of those whose souls it is his duty to watch over. This is the principal means whereby the Lord imparts, to the teacher, "a wise and understanding heart."

Secondly, retired prayer is important to the teacher, because it will engage his heart more in the work. How is it possible for a teacher to be constantly seeking the blessing of God upon his work, and his heart not to become more endeared to it? How is it possible for him to be habitually supplicating the blessing of God, and his heart not affected thereby? Oh no, it is not possible where the feelings are sincere: for living near the source of heavenly influence the teacher will be constantly in the receipt of fresh supplies of spiritual grace, which will most effectually work upon the feelings of the heart. Prayer in retirement is one of the most effectual means for warming the heart by sweet influences from above. No teacher can fall upon his knees in his closet, feeling himself to be alone with God, without having his heart drawn, as it were, by an invisible power towards the object of his supplications. We may assure ourselves of the precious truth, that this is one of the most effectual means of engendering the best and purest of feelings in our labours.

The heart and feelings are most likely to be influenced in retirement before God; and the teacher, in his private devotions, is thus most likely to feel his best affections drawn, as it were, by a power which it is quite beyond his capacity to explain.

Thirdly, retired prayer is of importance to the teacher, because it enables him to plead for his class, both collectively and individually before Almighty God. It is impossible to estimate the advantages which flow from the private supplications of a teacher. His secret labours may be as fruitful as his public ones; and the real value of those hours of retirement, spent in the immediate presence of Jehovah, may at a future time be proved. The teacher then is not speaking to his *class*, but he is speaking to *God*, on behalf of his class; and as child after child passes through his mind, we cannot venture to speculate upon the invaluable blessing that God may be pleased to bestow. The prayers of a righteous man, we are assured, avail much; and surely we may be led to believe thus far of the private devotions of a Sunday-school teacher.

And lastly, retirement to the teacher is sweet. It recruits his own energies, and prepares him for renewed acts of self-denial, and works of love. Communion with his heavenly Father is sweet to his soul; and the consciousness of being in the presence of God, stamps the hour of retirement as most precious to the Sunday-school teacher. The sweetness of it to one who has tasted of the heavenly gift, and who is sincere in his works, cannot be described. It is an hour in which heaven, as it were, is opened before his eyes, and he feels himself influenced by heavenly motions of inestimable value. It is sweet to him, because he can, without let or hindrance, contemplate the cross on which his dear Redeemer died; and thereby considerably enhance his earnest desires. Oh! the sweetness of the hour cannot be expressed. It far surpasses the richest enjoyments which the world can confer.

Such, my dear fellow labourers in Christ, are the blessings which flow from the hour of retirement for prayer, and the study of God's word. The more we go to God, and the more we rely upon him, the greater will be the blessing which will result from our instruction. Let me, in the spirit of deep humility, beseech you to seek God in retirement, more and more. Let me lead you, if it be possible, more constantly to the throne of grace in private. Let me entreat you to spend more time in your closet with your heavenly Father. Let me earnestly supplicate of you to hold more and more communion with your Father in secret, and that Father beholding you in secret shall reward you openly.

W. D.

SUNDAY SCHOOL HAPPINESS.

SUNDAY SCHOOL HAPPINESS? If we are to see with the eyes of Dean Close, there is no such thing to be discovered. "The last feather that breaks the camel's back" can be no source of pleasure; and if his theory of Sunday schools be true we must expect to find the school-room filled with unhappy and woe-begone faces, the owners of which are martyrs to a rare, and most delightful, filial, or pastoral obedience. We are bold enough to hold a contrary opinion, and to believe that Scripture is much more interesting than Arithmetic, or Botany—and that Sunday school teachers may even be as popular as the most learned certificated masters, in spite of the overwhelming attainments of the latter. From such comparisons, however, we turn aside, declining to put the day and the Sunday schools in competition with each other. "Suum Cuique:" only let discontented deans and dignitaries let us alone, if they don't like us: they are a very small minority amongst their clerical brethren.

Sunday-school Happiness! We have seen much of it, in our experience, and trust to see a vast deal more. Indeed, amongst the many Sunday schools we have visited, of very unequal degrees of efficiency, we do not remember one that the children themselves, as a body, would have closed, if they had possessed the power. Some of the scholars, it is true, may come (as certainly they do on week days) from compulsion, some from mere habit, some for want of better employment—but in every tolerable school there is sure to be a body of happy and willing scholars—and some amount of true sunshine.

It is worth while to ask, then what are the elements of Sunday school happiness? How may we contribute our share to the moral sunshine? how help to throw an air of attractiveness over the scene?

Now first let us bargain for SINCERITY: we mean that the teacher should never assume a manner not natural. If we unhappily feel out of tone, and tune, and unable to enter into the work in that spirit, the remedy is to be found in prayer, not in pretension. The possession of a happy, sunny spirit of genial sympathy is as lawful a subject of prayer as intellectual power, or influence; and indeed, many would join us in thinking such a spirit one of God's choicest gifts, bestowed for some of the noblest ends. They who know the delight of passing from the heavy clouded atmosphere of the metropolis, into the pure free air of the country, will appreciate the illustration as applied to the relief of coming into contact with such peo-

ple. We feel at ease, assured that they will never betray us, nor deceive us,—that any friendship they may evince is real, and that if we have won their affection, it will be our own fault if we lose it.

This is a phase of character that children will especially enjoy. They know, almost by instinct, the difference between an affected and patronising air, and the heart-felt sympathy we now speak of; and that their teacher really cares for them is one of the chief elements of their Sunday School happiness. Without denying, for a moment, the existence of much pure and disinterested friendship amongst their own class in life, we yet count as an extra source of pleasure to them the affectionate care and assistance of one above them not only in social rank, but also in knowledge and power.

Our next point, for we can but bestow a few suggestive remarks on each, is a widely different one, but equally important—CONTROL. Man is not made, or fitted to be uncontrolled in any conceivable thing, and a rational reception of this truth is essential to his happiness. The Christian's freedom, so dearly purchased, so highly prized, is freedom not from law, but from lawless transgression: and they are the happiest whose lives are most perfectly controlled by the will of God. We may safely apply this rule to children. It has even been said by a sound writer that an authority partaking sometimes of harshness was far preferable to none at all: that children would be happier when even occasionally tyrannised over than when left to the uncontrolled exercise of their own will. Sternness is an evil of the opposite character, and as fatal to happiness—but when the teacher possesses the sincere affection we have just before stated to be requisite, then, the more the class is under control, the better for their happiness. And it is scarcely needful to point out how much the general comfort and happiness of the school at large depends on the way in which each class is controlled. One disorderly class disturbs the pleasure of all.

Another important part of the happiness is—PROGRESS. This may not be so universally true as the previous points, but generally speaking, children that are worth anything, rejoice to feel that they are getting on; and to them, accordingly every good lesson, explanatory or practical, is a source of pleasure. And if, by God's grace and teaching, the eyes of their understanding are indeed opened, and they see the truth as it is in Jesus, who shall estimate the happiness either of teacher or scholar, as the riches of the Scripture are Sunday after Sunday unrolled, whilst the experience of daily life, as it were confirms the lessons of the BOOK? Thank God, even of this high happiness there is much to be found in our Sunday Schools. Many a teacher has cause to be grateful for such a cheering result, and learns

to labour on, amidst many discouragements, hoping, nay believing, that yet more fruit will appear in God's good time, and content to trust Him that He will at last bring both teachers and taught to rejoice together, and heighten each other's happiness.

We might go on to speak of some minor sources of happiness, such as the sympathy of numbers, the ties of class friendships,—or even the treats, the library, the social intercourse, all valuable,—but our subject has insensibly passed to the higher ground from which we do not like to descend: so here we leave it, commending it to our readers, as a profitable topic for thought. "Do I find pleasure in my work? Is that pleasure of a high and pure character? Do I give pleasure? Are my children happy? Is the school any the better or happier for me?" These are home questions; may they lead us to think of and to follow Him, who, in seeking the happiness of others, not pleasing Himself, yet found in such a life the highest, noblest happiness for Himself, and for the objects of His love.

E. G. F.

CHRIST'S JEWELS.

THERE are certain portions of God's Word which no earnest Christian can read without feeling his heart melt within him; the 16th and 17th verses of the 3rd chapter in the book of the prophet Malachi, form one of these "pleasant songs." It is not necessary, in these enlightened days of our happy country, to preach against solitary life, or this short passage might be brought forward as a strong argument in favour of Christian communion; still there are some who seek to serve the Lord while they habitually maintain as much reserve, even towards their brethren in Christ, as though they were either ashamed of their profession, or labouring under the same delusion as Elijah, when he thought none but himself served the Lord.

Exceeding blessing invariably follows every form of Christian intercourse, whether public or private; we may search our never failing testimony, the Bible, in confirmation of this fact. 2 Chron. v. 2, to vii. 18, and Acts ii., are chapters which strikingly illustrate it; but we may find another instance, more thrilling though less awful than these, if we turn to Luke xxiv. 13—36. Here we do not indeed see Christian communion honoured by the visible glory

of Jehovah, as was manifested in Solomon's temple; nor by the mighty appearance of the Holy Ghost, as on the day of Pentecost; but we read, that while two lowly followers of the Saviour were journeying together and conversing on the all-important topic of the supposed Messiah, "Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them"—the presence of the Eternal Three was there, for "in Jesus dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." This was the first evidence of the fulfilment of the promise recorded in Matt. xviii. 20: is it also the last? Who, amongst all the multitude of God's people, has not felt the blessedness of Christian intercourse! It has been the powerful means used by our Heavenly Father to knit the hearts of many more closely to Himself—nay, I may venture to assert (without fear of diverging one fraction from the truth) that not one of God's children has passed his or her life-time without being benefitted by the strengthening influence of fellowship.

What refreshment is found by many weary, thirsting souls, in the very act of public worship! more especially, perhaps, by those Christians, whose appointed weekly labour obliges them to live among such as fear not God. I have marvelled at, and felt deep reverence for, the pure delight evinced by some on the return of the day of rest, which affords them again and again, the privilege of joining with others in prayer and praise, and of hearing God's ministers discourse on the theme they most love.

Much, however, as a child of God is blessed, by uniting with congregations in holy services, still more do rays of heavenly light appear to descend upon all who, in their private life, seek fellowship with those who love the Lord, or proffer sympathy to struggling brothers and sisters, whose feeble faith might sink unfostered; for even on earth rich recompense follows such intercourse,—Christians strengthen each others' hands; he that watereth shall himself be watered; and when two or three agree on earth, touching anything they desire of God, He has promised to grant it; no tie is so strong nor so lasting as the pure bond of friendship which has been founded on mutual love to Christ; lastly, to quote the inspired verses before us: "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

Now let us analyse these precious words, "They that feared the Lord spake often *one to another*." Notice especially the fact that true believers make no parade of their faith; they are silent on the

subject dearest to their hearts towards the ungodly, for they will not unnecessarily tempt them to scoff at sacred things. By their actions, indeed, they let men know to whom they belong; but only to their own brethren do they delight to pour out the feelings of their inmost souls.

"Spake *often*." The name they love is not seldom on their lips, for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

"A book of remembrance." This is a beautiful figure of speech, alluding (Dr. Adam Clarke suggests) to the record kept by kings, see Esther vi. 1, of such as merit reward. Just in the same way the King of kings holds those in remembrance who, in the midst of the evils and temptations of this life, rejoice to speak and think of their unseen, but ever present, Lord.

"For them that *feared* the Lord." This does not mean with a *slavish* fear. Solomon, who more than once declares that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," explains that "the fear of the Lord is *to hate evil*," Prov. viii. 13.

"And they shall be mine." The Lord of hosts, in that last great and terrible day, will claim them as his own:—

> "Safe, 'mid the terrors of that day,
> His people shall be blest;
> For they have found the Living Way
> Of peace, and joy, and rest.

"When I make up my *jewels*." The margin adds, or special treasure. (Here, again, I must borrow Dr. Adam Clarke's explanation.) "The interpretations frequently given of the word in this verse, comparing saints to jewels, are forced and false, the Hebrew being *segullah*, my peculium, my proper treasure, that which is a man's own, and most prized by him, not jewels; for in no part of the Bible does the word mean a gem or precious stone of any kind." Although we are debarred, in strict adherence to truth, from accepting the word *jewels* as a literal rendering of the Hebrew *segullah*, the gracious meaning remains unaltered; and I think we may safely retain the expression, as a concise and real interpretation of the Hebrew sentiment, when we notice the undisputed translations of Isaiah lxii. 3 and Zech. ix. 16, which contain words of nearly the same signification.

"And I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." A Father's tender love will be theirs, shielding them from wrath, in the time when his anger will be poured out on the wicked.

In considering these verses, dear friends, I am desirous to draw

attention to the thoughts and feelings they should call forth in us as Sunday school teachers. It is no new thing to state that very few bands of teachers are united as brethren; many plausible reasons are given for such disunion, but the truth is not in one of them. It may seem proper, for instance, that, since teachers are drawn from so many different grades of society, those of higher rank should maintain a distant manner towards all in humbler positions. But see, to begin with, the effect of such demeanour on the childrens' minds: it makes them draw invidious comparisons; and, what is worse, induces them to act in a similar way towards one another. I have noticed that a needy child, sometimes, will be hardly spoken to by its more prosperous companions.

It is true, we have the highest authority for sustaining due regard for the varied ranks of life; our Lord acknowledges it in saying, "When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a *more honourable* man than thou be bidden of him, and he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, 'Give this man place'; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room." Luke xiv. 8, 9. And St. Paul, in the thirteenth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, writes thus, "Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

They who occupy the higher positions, are not intended, even by the Gospel law, to place themselves on a level with those beneath them, for God has given them the power or influence, belonging to their several stations, to hold as his stewards; so they are not warranted under any false idea of humility, in relinquishing it. Neither would it be right in any, on whom the Great Master has seen fit to bestow a smaller portion, to aspire to any superior earthly standing, for which they are not fitted. Each should seek rightly to fill his or her own appointed place: whether it be a lofty station in which power is given, like the glorious sun, to shed light and hope on thousands; or a lowly lot, like some little flower whose only gift is to show reflected, in its humble grace, a tender Father's love and care.

Yet all these distinctions should be kept within their proper sphere; they are out of place in a Sunday school, where all the teachers meet to fill the same offices, and in that relation to each other, are every one on an equality.

When Peter the Great, of Russia, went to learn the art of ship-building in Holland, he left behind him all pomp and state, which would have been out of keeping with his capacity as a workman in the dockyards. We may look still higher.—The King of kings came not to save mankind in all the glory of his awful majesty; for this would have left unfulfilled his loving mission,—but as the "Man

of Sorrows," He appeared among men, whose griefs He came to bear.

And we too, my fellow-teachers, if our hearts are rightly in the work, our motives for undertaking it pure, must lay aside each puny consideration of rank, when we enter the scene of our mutual labours. Every excuse made to ourselves and others, for the formality or coolness too frequently existing between us is *false;* the only true reason being, that we are not among those who "fear the Lord;" for of them it is written, "they spake often one to another." God grant that these last words may be said, with the same deep meaning, of many Sunday school teachers; that a large company of them may be claimed by Christ, in that day when He shall make up his "jewels."

Rana.

HOPE ON, HOPE EVER.

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

These words of the inspired preacher would seem in an especial manner to come home to the Sunday school teacher whose work (as that of the sower) is necessarily a hidden one, and who, in the humble hope that his "labour is not in vain in the Lord," must not be "weary in well-doing," but lay hold on the promise that in due season he will reap, if he *faint not.*

Endurance in the work is the condition to which success is attached; still all who are engaged in it know that is not without its seasons of extreme depression, when even the most self-denying efforts (as we think them) fail, and all our endeavours to excite interest, or arrest attention, are responded to by yawns, and other symptoms of listlessness.

The following little incident, which is recorded as the faithful experience of a Sunday school teacher, may not, as such, be without its interest, and its object will be gained, if the fainting energy of any fellow labourer is thereby stimulated to renewed exertion.

I have a class of girls, varying in age from eleven to fourteen, in a country school, and though we meet from Sunday to Sunday with expressions of mutual attachment, still I have not been without fear that my instructions failed of making any lasting impression. On the 4th Sunday in Advent, I endeavoured, in explaining the *Collect,*

to give them some idea of the races forming part of the Olympic games, and the evergreens with which our room was decorated for Christmas, furnished me with a good illustration of the laurel wreaths for which the runners strove, and which were so justly called by St. Paul "corruptible crowns." On Septuagesima Sunday, as I took my seat, my heart was gladdened, when, after our customary morning salutations and good wishes, bright animated faces were turned towards me and eager voices vied in telling me, "Please, teacher the *Epistle* for to-day is all about the corruptible and incorruptible crowns you told us about a few Sundays ago." The straitness of the course,—the need of continued running,—the goal,—the wreaths of leaves,—indeed, all the details with which I had furnished them were, in their simple phraseology, recapitulated to me, showing that the lesson I had feebly endeavoured to *illustrate* had been thoroughly brought home. I gathered from the little incident two special causes for thankfulness.

1st. That God could, and did, use a weak instrument for his purpose. *Love* is the only bond between my class and its teacher, for coming as I do, under the description St. Paul gives of himself, viz., small in stature and in speech contemptible, I have certainly no personal dignity with which to awe my class into respect. But this love is a bond strong enough to bring back, from time to time, to *our class*, as they like to call it, elder girls, who have long left it. One home from service for a little while, "hopes she may come till she gets another place." Another, grown up, comes of an afternoon, "because mother can spare her." And another, lame, and apprenticed to a dressmaker, comes, though but once a day, "because it is too far to walk." "Shall you be sure and come this afternoon, even if it is wet, teacher?" is generally their parting salutation of a morning; and many a poorly-clad little scholar comes in spite of the rain, because she thinks teacher is sure to be there.

2nd. That the services of our Church, in their purity and harmony, furnishing her Sunday school teachers, as they do, with ever varying lessons, based upon, taken from, and to be illustrated by Holy Writ, are a cause for deep gratitude.

I should not have ventured to say so much about *self*, were it not that the identity of the teacher is lost in the signature of

S. B.

The Teacher in his Study.

SCRIPTURE PHILOLOGY.

No. VII.—Idiomatic Words and Phrases.

The heavenly-minded Leighton, in his "Rules for a Holy Life," thus instructs us; "if, in the time of your spiritual exercise, you find yourself drawn to any better, or to as good a contemplation as that is follow the track of that good motion so long as it shall last." Although we have not completed our illustrations of our Lord's Idioms, yet because a meditation under another division of Scripture Philology, which we have designated, "Idiomatic Words and Phrases," and not yet entered upon, comes before us, we propose to proceed with it, and follow the advice of the good Archbishop.

Our first word is but a monosyllable.

Gal. iii. 20.—"But God is *one*." This monosyllable forms part of a remarkable passage upon which many critics have tried their hands with little success, if it is not presumptuous in us to say so; and especially as we encourage ourselves to add, we hope to make it as clear as a bell; its note is, also, most harmonious, and cheering to the troubled heart.

The passage in which it stands we must quote in full; and in this paper embody more Scripture than is usual with us; "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was 430 years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. . . . . Wherefore, then, serveth the law? It was added, because of transgressions, . . . and was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator; now a Mediator is not a Mediator of one, but God *is one*," v. 17—20.

Note here that the word "*one*" is used in a particular sense; it does not signify one of many, or of more than one; but *one only and alone*,—alone in his own grandeur and glory! As it is written, "there is One alone, and there is not a second; yea, He hath neither child nor brother!" Such, singularly, is the Great and Holy God!

In Latin we should express *this* kind of one by unicus, not unus. By the way, if it be said, "why surely our God hath a Son, who died for our sins," that, indeed, is true; but true in a far higher sense than man can comprehend, or human criticisms embrace; and we cannot forget that when the Lord is pleased to teach us about the Divine essence, He says, "I and my Father are One,"—"ἓν,"

not "εἷς," one *Thing*, not one *Person*. And so the Apostle rests in his argument, and settles into the emphatic conclusion, "Now a Mediator is not a Mediator of one, but God is one, only, and alone!"

The question often has been asked, "What *is* his argument? How is the passage to be understood? It seems hopelessly obscure." Shall we venture to say that all this obscurity arises from a mistake about the covenant the Apostle is speaking of? "There can be no mistake about that (say some of us), because he calls it the covenant which was confirmed before of God *in Christ*, and, therefore, it must be the new covenant." We reply, it is not so; there is nothing about "in Christ" in the discourse; the Apostle's words are εἰς χριστὸν, not ἐν χριστῳ, "concerning Christ," not *in* Christ. In all the many places in which the preposition εἰς occurs in St. Paul's writing, it is always rendered of, or upon, or into, or what is equivalent to some other preposition than *in*. Indeed, the very phrase itself εἰς χριστὸν occurs again, Eph. v. 32, where our translators naturally render it, "*concerning* Christ and his Church." Bearing this fact in mind, which lies at the root of all the difficulties that have been made or found, we now proceed to the main business in subserviency to our Philology, which is to elucidate the whole passage, ending with the profound and sublime conclusion, "but God *is one, only, and alone*."

And, first, we have to look out for some covenant, confirmed 430 years before the giving of the law, the main condition of which is, that it is a covenant *concerning Christ;* and if we can find one exactly answering to the 430 years, in regard to its confirmation, why that will add another, and a conclusive proof that we have found what we are in search of. But, not to omit any of our proofs, suppose we find a covenant, *different from* "the new covenant in Christ's blood," that not only relates mainly to Christ, and was ratified 430 years before the law, but also has the very words in it which the inspired Apostle is making the key-stone of his argument, "*in thy seed* shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (see verse 16); we think, then, it will be impossible to resist the conviction that we have been misled by the sound of the words, "confirmed before *in Christ*," to mistake one covenant for another; that is, supposing we have been accustomed with many to take that false view of the passage.

To pursue our researches systematically, and in the ordinary way, we find the Apostle referring to a covenant made with Abraham, about his "seed," all along in this passage of the Galatians. Now, if we turn to Genesis xv. 1, we find the commencement of a parley between God and Abraham, which runs after this fashion of

unfathomed love and condescension:—"Fear not, Abraham, I am thy exceeding great reward!" . . . Lord God! what wilt Thou, canst Thou give me to make me blest, seeing I go childless? (and God brought him forth abroad.)—"Look now toward heaven and tell the stars if thou be able to number them."

"And now the Patriarch's heart his faith sustains;
His dazzled eyes
Turn upward from the wide and sandy plains,
To the clear skies.

The shining wheels of the celestial Wain
Were rolling on;
A track of light that furrowed the blue plain,
Beyond it shone.

Orion walked in brightness through the night,
And from afar
The Pleiads sent out messengers of light
For their lost star.

Upon the brow of night the Northern Crown
Rested in pride;
And the stern Hunters solemnly looked down
On either side.

The jewelled waves of Berenice's Hair
Gleam'd strangely bright;
And the pale Lady in her gilded chair
Was veil'd in light.

The hazy splendours of the Milky Zone
Belted the sky;
Its countless glories melted into one
White Galaxy!" *

Does the entranced Hebrew try to count them, think you, my dear reader? Or rests his eye where they thicken in that "Milky Zone?"—His gaze, however, is soon recalled to a brighter vision (verse 1), by those few gracious emphatic words, "so shall thy seed be!" 'Twas then, we may well believe, "he saw *the day of Christ;* he saw it, and was glad."

The next thing we have to enquire about is, whether this was a covenant; and whether this seed was Christ. For if so, then this covenant, if it prove to be such, was "εἰς χριστὸν." Now we have Apostolical authority to say, in the full sense, it was solely *concerning* Christ. As to the time, 430 years before the law, it answers to that exactly.

* We believe none of our readers will be offended that we have adapted a description of the Northern instead of the Southern starry hemisphere to our purpose here, as the lines are so very full of pathos and grandeur.

But we are further to enquire, was this a covenant, or only a promise? *Certainly* a "*covenant* of promise," that is to say, a promissary covenant; and there were more of the same nature confirmed to Abraham by sacrifices, or circumcision, or oath, Heb. vi. 17, all ratified, and all about this "seed" in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. They were all made about the same time; and they are called by St. Paul "the covenants," and distinguished from "the giving of the law," &c., Rom. ix. 4. So like are they, that it may also be said they are all covenants of grace, but neither of them *the* covenant of grace, or new covenant, which was confirmed "in my blood," saith Jesus, in reference to that memorial of it, called by us the Lord's Supper, for that is only its *memorial.*

We said, *certainly* it was a covenant, and not merely a promise; and it will not do for anyone to insist that it was not a true covenant because *it had no Mediator* (of which more in its place), for God calls it a covenant, as we shall see; and, besides, the very addition of the terms "of grace" to any covenant, show a liberality of conditions and arrangements infinitely more generous, so to speak, as in this case where God is the originator, than can possibly apply to a covenant of works, and of equivalents.

It is time, then, to return to the chapter in proof of our assertion that it was a true covenant.

Verse 8.—"And Abraham said, Lord God, whereby shall *I know* and be assured, that I shall inherit it, that is, in my seed? And he said, take me an heifer, a goat, a ram, &c., and divide them *in the midst*, and lay each piece one over against another. . . . . And it came to pass, at the going down of the sun, that a smoking furnace, and a lamp of fire, passed between those pieces; in the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham." Thus, then, this covenant was made, and thus it was confirmed, or ratified with sacrifice, 430 years before the law. In allusion to such ratification of covenants, we read in the Psalms, "gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." And again, in Jeremiah xxxiv. 18, "Which have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before me when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof."

We do not care here to produce examples from classical writers to the same effect, like the "cæsa fœdera porca" of Virgil, and only observe, further, that our own term *strike* a covenant, most probably originates in the act of killing the victim.

Having now exhibited in the light, one covenant concerning Christ, and referred to others, the whole glory and grandeur of which consists in this, that, in some *heir* of the Father of the faithful, all the families of the earth are blessed, and to be blessed,

very easy it seems to us to illuminate the darkness of this passage of our present paper, "now a Mediator is not a Mediator of one, but God is one."

In the 15th verse, the Apostle observes, "Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, it cannot be annulled or added to."

Verse 17. But this covenant (to which I, Paul, allude) was God's, and was confirmed by sacrifice 430 years before the law, and had to do with, and embodied a promise to give Abraham "a seed," in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed—and "that seed was Christ." Moreover, besides these two things, that the confirmed covenant could not be *added* to by appending the law as *part of its conditions* and, also, that the law was not given till 430 years afterwards; observe, that law was very different in other respects from God's *unmediated* covenant with Abraham; for it was ordained by angels, in the hand of the *mediator* Moses, and given to the Israelites. "And a mediator is not a mediator for One; but God is One, only, and alone, that One alone to whom there is not a second, yea, who hath neither child nor brother!"

And thus stands out the truth, on which our salvation rests. God has bound Himself, by covenant engagements, to give Abraham "a seed," of whom Isaac and Jacob were but the primary chain-links, though, like Jesus, "promised heirs," in whom all who will but exercise Abraham's faith in the same God, shall be "blessed," that is, happy. Do we wish to be happy? If you and I, dear reader, are not happy, we know the reason why; and we must search out the cause of weakened or wanting faith; for as to God failing,—surely if a *bound* man may be confided in, the faithful, gracious God of Abraham may *now* be trusted.

And what shall we more say? Shall we raise again the oft-repeated, often deadening cry, "faith is the gift of God." No, no, though doubtless it is so, in St. James' sense, chap. i. 17: yet are we not all responsible for it, as well as for repentance? I mean just now, rather responsible to ourselves than to God. Look up at the sun, as Abraham looked up at the stars. Does He not shine by his own light? Do you need to *have it proved to you* that He shines? And think you that God, as a loving, good God, shines not by his own light also? Look at nature first, if you will: see Acts xiv. 17, and xvii. 24—28: then look at Calvary!

Gumfreston, Tenby. G. A. S.

LESSONS FROM COMMON THINGS.

In the present day, a great deal of attention is paid to 'Common Things.' The most scientific minds have bent their energies to the investigation of their properties, and to making them understood by the million. And 'Common Things' have well repaid the pains which have been expended upon them; as many wonders have been discovered by the philosopher in the thing we daily touch, and look upon, and eat, as by the astronomer, who with his telescope sweeps the circle of the heavens. 'Common Things' are wonderful; because common though they be, in them we can discover the finger, the forethought, and the wisdom of God.

There is no reason why we should surrender 'Common Things,' into the hand of the man of science, and say, you may give object lessons upon them in the day school, but we Sunday-school teachers have nothing to do with them. Everything should bring grist to the Sunday-school mill; with us the adage should be true, "All's fish that comes to our net;" and a very useful dish can be served up, made out of 'Common Things.'

But not only should we not despise 'Common Things,' but we should make a great deal of them, as very valuable aids in conveying by illustration many important truths to the minds of those we have to teach. We have to do with common understandings; with minds which are more familiar with 'common things,' than those which are uncommon; the habits of thought have these for their subjects; facts connected with them are more easily comprehended, and are afterwards more frequently brought to mind, than facts connected with what is not continually before the senses; and it is surely well worth our while, if we teach at all, to do so in such a way as to be remembered and understood.

See how much there is addressed to common understandings in the Bible; how much is said about common duties; and how much of the imagery is taken from common things—leaven, bread, fat, oil, flour, blood, water, wind, fire, &c.; what can be commoner than all these? And yet some of the sublimest truths, some of the most important doctrines in Holy Scripture are conveyed to us by the Spirit through them.

We propose to give an illustration of the teaching of religious truths from Common Things, hoping that it will prove instructive in itself, and that it may also be of great practical use in another way,—by directing the minds of Sunday-school teachers to the analogies of Scripture, which are full of interest and value to us, whether as teachers we speak of them to others, or as private christians consider them

for the instruction of our own souls. For illustrating this mode of teaching, we will choose for our subject OIL, which is a very common thing.

The Holy Spirit is compared in Scripture, in his influences, to OIL; and we would draw attention to some of the properties of this common thing, as exemplifying some of the operations of the Holy Ghost.

One property of OIL is its power of *cleansing*, Lev. xiv. 17, 18. It brightens up the wood or metal to which it is applied, and produces a polish which otherwise could not be had. This is precisely the work of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of God is a cleansing Spirit. Passing into the heart, penetrating it, He brightens it, and gives it a lustre such as no education, no influences of the world can bestow. We know how much the world values the external polish, which lends a charm to society, but there is many an one accounted polished by the world who has no particle of polish in the sight of God. Let us ask ourselves, and put the question to our children also, "Has the Holy Spirit made the heart shine?" Has He conferred on me those graces which make God esteem a heart bright; has He kept them by his energy shining so brightly, that when the Most High looks into my soul He can see his own image? Let us look into the wood which has received a high polish under the influence of oil, and it reflects our likeness; and so will the gleaming metal from which it has removed the rust; and when God looks into the heart under the full influence of the Holy Ghost, does He not see his own image there? We gather rust in our daily conversatiou with the world; its very breath has a dimming influence upon the soul; the clouding power of earthly relationships and employments are felt and mourned over by every true christian man; the brightening, the restoring influence, is to be found in the Holy Ghost.

Healing is another property of oil; we have this frequently referred to in Holy Scripture (see Luke x. 34, &c.), and the Spirit of God exercises wonderful healing influences upon the soul. The gift of life is by Jesus Christ, but the healings of the soul are by the Holy Ghost. The Spirit is sent by Jesus, He operates from Jesus, but He it is that heals the wounds of the soul. When sin has been fallen into, the Spirit leads to repentance, applies the blood of Jesus, brings in joy and gladness once again, clears away the festerings and swellings from the wound, and soothes, and mollifies it, until it closes up, and is seen and felt no more. We can have no peace in our sin-stricken souls, unless the Spirit brings it in by his own precious influence; He gives us the witness of peace with God, and without that witness the sore must continually fret and vex.

A further property of OIL is its power of illuminating. Scripture

says a good deal about this, see Matt. xxv. 4, Ex. xxv. 6, &c.; and it is the Holy Ghost who illumines the christian's heart. The light shews the way, and when He is in the soul, He illumines its path; the light dispels the alarm of those noises which are so full of terror when heard in the dark, and when the Spirit is in us, we cease to *fear* either the threatenings of Satan, or those self-reproachings for sin, which must terrify us if we had no inward light; the light reveals both the way of danger and that of safety, deformities and graces; and when the Spirit is in the soul, all these results are produced. Oil is associated in our minds with the idea of *sustained* light. It was because the virgins took no oil with them, that their lamps went out. Very different is the calm, and steady, and sustained illumination of the lamp fed with oil, from the fitful glare of the torch, which blazes for a few moments, and must then smoulder and expire. We must ask ourselves, and (putting the question in a simple form), ask our children also, what they know of the sustained, even, illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit in the heart? In many schools, alas! there is but little taught about the Holy Ghost; much is taught of the Father, and of the Son, but little or nothing about the Holy Spirit. Let our teachers who have hitherto been thus negligent, amend this great mistake; they will find that the more they teach about the Spirit, and the more they look for his influences, and the more they feel their need of them, the more blessing will come down upon their own souls, and upon those for whom they labour.

Oil has further a wonderful power of *sustaining life;* it resists the influences of frost, and is an important ingredient in the animal frame for supplying its natural waste, and keeping up its vitality. We may mention here a very interesting illustration of this. In the lochs and pools of the Arctic regions are innumerable minnows. In the winter the water around these fish becomes one solid mass to the very bottom, and the fish are often found in clusters, and so brittle that their bodies may be broken like a piece of glass, and yet upon the ice thawing, animation is again established, and they become as lively as ever. Scientific men attribute the phenomena to the heart of the little fish being surrounded with a fat or oily liquid, which is never liable to be frozen, and which in this instance guards, as it were, the organ of life, and preserves its vitality unimpaired. Under what untoward circumstances will the influences of the Spirit preserve life in the soul! It may be that a chill may seize upon, and stiffen, and contract for a season our outward powers of motion;—perhaps we may unhappily, to all human appearance, seem dead as well as cold; but oh! the Spirit as a sustainer of life, holds that life in being, until thawed and warmed, the christian not only lives, but gives *symptoms* of life once more.

Once again (for the limits of this paper forbid our following out the subject in all its points) let us look at the *lubricating* properties of oil. It softens, and makes supple, and causes wheel to run harmoniously with wheel, so that all noise, and jarring, and wearing away, is removed.

Here we recognize types of many of the influences of the Spirit. What softens down the hard heart like the influence of the Holy Ghost? What makes the christian pliable for his work, taking away all stiffness and inaptitude, like the indwelling of the influence of the Spirit? What balances and makes the various parts of his character run smoothly together, but the power of this same Spirit? and, lastly, what makes him work harmoniously with others, without jar or creak, but this self-same Spirit?

Oh! the influences of the Holy Ghost in this one aspect of softening down all asperities, and making apt to work, and sweetening the fellowship of christians in intercourse or labour, are wonderful indeed. May they be found in every Sabbath-school in which these lines are read, and may our readers be apt to teach, and apt to love! The wheels of our Sunday-schools oiled each one on the points on which it revolves itself, and each one in its point of contact with others would thus help to build up the Church of God, silently indeed after the fashion of the builders of the temple, but surely, under the influences of the Spirit.

P. B. P.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

II.

The Third Commandment is intended to instruct mankind as to the manner in which they are to worship and serve God, as the second was designed to teach them the kind of worship they were to avoid. It is to be observed that these two commandments are the only ones in the Decalogue, to which special judgments against the violation of them are appended, as if to signify that although the Holy One which inhabiteth eternity must needs abhor all sin in his creatures, yet those of idolatry and blasphemy are especially hateful in his sight, and destructive to the human soul, and, therefore the more carefully to be avoided.

By the prohibition, "*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*," we are taught negatively to sanctify it, and hold it in especial reverence. The pious Jews of old would never utter or

write the sacred name of Jehovah if it could be avoided, substituting another word for it (as we have done in the English translation of the Bible), even in their sacred books. It is told of a very learned and good man, the Hon. Robert Boyle, that "the very name of God was never mentioned by him without a pause, and a visible stop in his discourse," because he felt the unutterable Majesty of the Infinite thus brought home to his thoughts. It is our duty "in all our ways to acknowledge Him," to adore Him as the Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of his people;—to acknowledge his dealings with us to be just and true, and not to murmur at the orderings of his Providence;—to attribute to Him the good we receive, and to praise Him for the mercies we enjoy;—not to be ashamed to confess ourselves his servants;—to defend his truth when it is assailed;—and to reverence "his holy name and his word" in all our doings.

Thus shall we be kept from the ordinary way in which this command is violated. The declaration, "My name continually every day is blasphemed," spoken of the Jews of old (Isaiah lii. 5), could, alas! be said of the Christian nations now. For in the common talk, in the violent anger, in the idle ribaldry, in the profane assertions, which meet our ears as we pass through the streets, is there not the constant use of the Holy Name "in vain," to no good purpose, to no reverent end, but from forgetfulness, contempt, mockery, or even intended blasphemy?

We need not add that this commandment must also condemn the practice of appealing to God to witness to the truth of the assertions made in ordinary converse in daily life, and the common habit of the world in appealing to Him thoughtlessly on every trivial matter in which their statements are questioned or disbelieved (Matt. v. 34, 37); although it does not forbid the oath required by the laws of the land, or by special solemnity, to witness to a true and just cause, that peace and quietness may be preserved, that the innocent may not be unjustly punished, and that guilt may meet with its due (see Exodus xxii. 11; Deut. vi. 13; Heb. vi. 16). To swear falsely, or as we are accustomed to say, to commit perjury, is a violation of this law, so fearful and so rare, that not only is it held in abhorrence even among men, but is so severely punished in this life, that the judgment against such a flagrant insult to God here pronounced, begins here, as it will be continued and completed hereafter, unless mercy is sought and found by deep repentance for Christ's sake.

But while the young, and the earnest Christian professor, may avoid all these ways of openly violating this Divine law,—neither using the name of God irreverently in conversation, nor by the

coarse and vulgar oath, nor by false witness,—yet is there still one way in which we must all plead guilty, and adopt the prayer following the repetition of the commandment in our Liturgy, "Lord have mercy upon us." For in our thoughts of God, and in our prayers and praises when speaking to Him, if there be irreverence in our secret feelings as to His dispensations; if there be forgetfulness of Him, when repeating with our lips petitions for mercy or for grace; and if there be no making melody in our heart, when our lips are praising Him; are not such thoughts, and petitions and thanksgivings, a real violation of this law, since it is "in vain" we use the name of God, even when drawing near to him with our lips, if our hearts are far from Him!

The *Fourth Commandment* completes the series of precepts which are especially intended to guide us in our duty towards God our Creator, and to show us the nature of the worship and service we are to render to Him. The Sabbath (a Hebrew word signifying a secession or rest), is no ritual Jewish observance, although there were services connected with it, under the Mosaic dispensation, of that character. The word by which this commandment commences, "Remember," implies that it was not a new ordinance then first given, but a neglected or forgotten law, the observance of which the Jews were more strictly to renew; and hence it was that new reasons and motives were given, whereby that people especially were encouraged to keep it. In Exodus xxxi. 16, it is said, "The children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant; it is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever:" and in rehearsing the Law to the people, Moses added, in Deut. v. 15, another motive for its observance; "Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand and stretched-out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." These, however, are not the reasons given for its original institution, but for the particular form of its observance required among the Jewish people; hence this sign of the covenant is continually referred to by the prophets, and the neglect of it by the Israelites assigned as the cause of the judgments predicted by them.

The original purpose of the institution is declared in the Commandment itself, and takes us back to the first days of the world's history; for "on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all the work which He had made; and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it," Gen. ii. 2, 3. Hence the first day of Adam's life, after his creation, was the Sabbath, and its especial holiness in God's sight could not

have been unknown to him. And although we have little to guide us as to the mode of religious worship in patriarchal times, we cannot doubt that then also, at least among the descendants of Shem, the Sabbath was observed; the recorded reference to events marked by their recurrence after seven days, plainly showing that it was a well-known and fixed division of time. The Jews may have lost nearly all trace of it in Egypt, but even before the giving of the law at Sinai, it was spoken of to them as "the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord" (Exodus xvi. 23), and they were, therefore, forbidden to collect the manna on that day.

We see, then, that the Sabbath was no part of the Levitical law, although some of the ordinances of that law had reference to it, but that it was included in this Moral Code of Laws for all God's creatures, and the origin of it specifically assigned to the period of the world's creation. This alone would show that the observance of the Sabbath was not set aside when the Levitical law was "done away" on the coming of that Saviour, who came not to destroy, but to fulfil the law (Matt. v. 17); and that when he said "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark ii. 27), He did not mean to diminish the obligation, but simply to warn his hearers that the mere outward strictness of obedience to the law did not fulfil the purpose of its institution, which was the real benefit of man, in his physical condition as a creature appointed to labour, and in his spiritual condition as a worshipper of his God.

What, then, are the duties of the Sabbath, and its privileges? for they can scarcely be separated the one from the other. Rest is secured to us from earthly labour, and a portion of time is set apart to be consecrated for the care and nurture of the soul. The tender and merciful care of our heavenly Father in providing a season of repose (which modern medical science has shown to be adequately and exactly proportioned to the necessities of those who have to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, if the usual term of life is to be preserved), is alone a reason why we should bless God for the Sabbath; it enjoins the master to give those under his employment the rest which his own desire to profit by their labour might otherwise incline him to withhold, and even the beasts of burden are thought of, and their claim to rest enforced by this injunction, that in six days shall the needful work of the world be transacted, and that on the seventh day shall "no manner of work" be done, except such as the calls of mercy and kindness may dictate; for thus our Lord Himself interpreted the commandment to his envious Jewish opponents who remonstrated with Him for working some of his most striking miracles of healing on the Sabbath day (see Luke vi. 1—11; xiii. 10—17; xiv. 1—6).

But while God thus mercifully provides rest from earthly labour, he has consecrated the day he has thus set apart from toil, to be kept holy to himself; He calls it "*My* holy day," and we have, therefore, no right to employ it as we please. In thus separating us from our ordinary employments, He has provided for us the facility of withdrawing our attention from objects which might unfit us for that worship of God which it is the especial purpose of the institution that we should render to him. It gives us time and opportunity to assemble together for public worship, and to occupy ourselves in such exercises of devotion or usefulness, as may conduce to our own spiritual growth, or to the religious instruction or benefit of those around us. It is the Lord's day, *not ours;* and whatever be its employments, in public or private worship, in labours of love, or in speaking to others of the things which belong unto their peace, the purpose of the day—the honour of God who set it apart for his worship and service—ought never to be lost sight of.

The "seventh day" of the Jews has been changed to the "first day of the week" in the Christian Church, with the view to commemorate the day on which Christ, the Lord of the Sabbath, rose from the dead. The Commandment seems only to imply that after *six* days' labour should succeed *one* day's rest; and indeed the exact measurement of time for observing one particular hour for commencing the Sabbath, (as is the custom of the Jews), would throw the whole into confusion, by the mere differences of latitude and longitude alone. The Lord seems to have guided his Apostles especially to meet together on the first day of the week, to receive Him on his resurrection, (John x. 19—26), and under the direction of the Holy Ghost they afterwards met on that day for worship and preaching, (Acts xx. 7). From the times of the apostles, the Lord's day has therefore been kept as the Christian sabbath.

What then are the proper employments of this holy day, and what the offences by which the purposes of its institution are violated? Alas! how many are the ways in which these precious hours are wasted, perverted, debased; and in which God's anger against the violation of this loving law is kindled! To give up any of its sacred hours to worldly occupations, or to compel those under our authority to do so: to buy and sell, (Nehem. xiii. 15, 16), to write letters of business, to calculate the accounts of the week's profits: to do our own pleasure, and to turn away our foot from the sabbath, (Is. lviii. 13), by visits among our acquaintance, or taking journeys ostensibly for the health of the body, but which (while by the extent and nature of them they generally fail to produce this effect) are too often the preparation and pretext for that debasing excess and sensual indulgence which corrupt and destroy the soul:—these

are some of the many ways by which the Holy Sabbaths of our God are perverted and desecrated. Nor can it be fitting employment for this day to occupy our thoughts in reading the news of the week, or any books which, instructive in themselves though they may be, have no reference to the great purpose for which the sabbath was sanctified and consecrated from the beginning of the world—much less to spend it in simple listlessness and idleness, and in the indulgence of appetite.

The Christian's employment of the sabbath will be such as to make it "a delight" to himself, as well as "honourable" to God the owner of it. As good George Herbert has so sweetly sung,

> "Thou art a day of mirth:
> And where the week-days trail on ground,
> Thy flight is higher as thy birth;"

and it will be good for him to prepare for it by laying aside the cares and employments of his daily life the evening before, (Luke xxiii. 54), and by waking early on the sabbath morn to find himself, as the apostle in his solitude at Patmos—"in the Spirit on the Lord's day,"—the especial season when God calls his people to Himself, that they may seek the way of salvation, and the renewal of his blessing. A season of quiet retirement, of thought, of reading, of private prayer, will fitly precede and prepare for the public services of the sanctuary, for social prayer and praise, and the hearing of God's Word; or the intervals of the day preceding the morning and evening service may be employed, according to our circumstances, in various ways. "The Sabbath was made for man," for his good and benefit, and not that it should be made a burden: the interchange of home intercourse with our families and friends, the quiet walk for meditation, or to look from nature up to Nature's God, do not seem to us to be forbidden; while there are exercises of love, in visiting the poor, or ministering to the sick, comforting the sorrowing, or teaching the ignorant, (as it is the especial privilege of the Sunday school teacher to do), which will add to the blessedness of the day. Thus will the sabbath sanctify the week, and fit us the better to battle with its cares and temptations. Thus will the rest of God's holy day, and the worship we now feebly and imperfectly render, be the foretaste of that rest which remaineth for the people of God, and of that eternal sabbath in heaven where we shall worship Him unceasingly, without weariness and without distraction.

W. S.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS.

THE RATIONALE OF SPONSORSHIP.

FROM the 29th Canon arises in part, the obligations and difficulties of parents in general, and of clergymen in particular, in respect to godfathers and godmothers. In the experience of many, it is found impossible to comply with the injunction to reject the natural parents; for, in the present state of the lower orders, in small villages especially, the parents are unable to find other fit and canonical representatives of the new relation into which the child enters.

The office of sponsor is best regarded in a threefold point of view.—1st, Retrospective; 2nd, Present; and 3rd, Future; and the name godfather is both significant of new relations and privileges in respect to the child, and also comprehensive of the three *specific* duties which belong to it, namely, to be a *witness* for the past; to stand as a *confessor* for the present; and to engage as a *surety* for the future.

In referring to the HOLY SCRIPTURES for any recognition of the office, we find only Isaiah viii. 2, in which the prophet's *witnesses*, in respect to his child, are mentioned, which may be considered, perhaps, to be of doubtful application; and the word ἐπερώτημα in 1 Peter iii. 21, which seems to be understood both by Tertullian and Hooker to relate to the *confession* of faith made at baptism, and so throws light on that part of the duty of the godfather which consists in making a *confession* in the child's name at the Font, an act quite distinct from a testimony to the past, or a security for the future of the baptised.

In referring to the fathers we find Tertullian, in the second century, in his work, De Baptismo, chap, 18, mentioning "Sponsors," and calling "the answer," *i.e.*, the ἐπερώτημα of St. Peter, to which he refers, "Sponsionem salutis," or the engagement of salvation; and saying these words, which are nearly identical with St. Peter's, "The soul is consecrated, not by washing, but by the response."

The word is translated "answer" in our version, and "stipulation" in Beza's version, by metonymy, it being evidently derived from ἐπερωταὼ; and the word *interrogate* is but the derivative. *Hooker* renders it "the *interrogative trial* of a good conscience before God."

CYRIL, of Alexandria, A. D. 412, says, "The 'Susceptor' said 'Amen' for the child; for these officers were called anciently, 'Susceptores' or undertakers."

Among the moderns, Wall draws the following parallel (copied as far as is pertinent only), to show that the office is derived from the Jews:—

JEWS.	CHRISTIANS.
(1).—Required the Proselyte to renounce idolatry, and believe in Jehovah.	(1).—To renounce the Devil (the God of this world), and believe in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
(2.)—Interrogated while standing *in* the water.	(2).—Ditto, *at* the water.
(3).—Baptised their Proselytes' infants.	(3).—Ditto, ditto.
(4).—Required that *the Father*, or three grave persons, should answer for him.	(4).—So we, our Canonical Interdict about the Father, excepted.
(5).—A Jewish Proselyte was said then "to be born again."	(5).—So we say.

The use of the term "born again" was not confined to the Jews and Christians, for Clement Alexandrinus says it was used among the Greeks with reference to the Eleusinian mysteries. And we have sure evidence that the Brahmins employ the term "twice born" in regard to the mysteries of their religion as yet taught in India, not, however, meaning thereby anything that implies, as with us, a change of heart and nature; but higher instruction only.

The later Jews,—see Maimonides,—confess to the use of baptism, which *they would hardly have adopted from Christ our Lord.*

It is thought that where the godfather is not necessary as a WITNESS, as in the case of adults, that the candidate has led of late an altered life (which is especially needful for missionaries' guidance in heathen lands), or necessary as a SPONSOR in relation to infants, to pledge that the child should be brought up as a Christian, he was still required, as a CONFESSOR, to repeat the Creed, or give the ἀπόρρημα in the child's name, showing out the sense and drift of the rite, and making up, as it were, what is wanting to the maturity of the child; the *normal* condition of the candidate being, of course, that of manhood, in which case "the confession can be made unto salvation" by the subject himself, as in the case of the Eunuch of Queen Candace.

In regard to the PROSPECTIVE branch of the Sponsor's office, this closely touches a serious mistake of the country at this time, namely, the confounding *training* with education; in other words, education with instruction. The rubrical direction explains itself plainly enough:—"Ye are to see that these infants are *virtuously brought up*," *i.e.*, trained "to lead a godly, &c., life:" and this great

matter seems to have been overlooked, and instruction substituted for training, just for the same reason that some of the mightiest and most necessary operations of nature are overlooked; namely, because they do not strike the senses so palpably. We should hardly know that the vital and invisible air existed if the birds were not borne up on its bosom; nor that we breathe it (so insensible is the operation), unless the sense of suffocation was a dreadful warning of death. Even thus it is with education; the silent action of mind upon mind, spirit upon spirit, conduct, and expression upon the quick sensibilities of infant human nature, is the true and only training and Christian education, and which it chiefly belongs to the parent to supply, and must, by the laws of nature, ever belong to him. We most of us feel that we owe all our early dread of sin to maternal influence; and if we afterwards learn in the Catechism, the words "Thou shalt not steal," these words are *chiefly* impressive because they strike again a chord that has been first stretched, so that it will vibrate by the hand of parental love. In a word, that education is *instinctive*, rather than the result of reflection and consideration; and that the teacher, in a moral point of view, *must be the pious parent's substitute at all times*, so far as he can, just like a true godfather.

"Education," said a celebrated orator, "is that which is imbibed from the moral atmosphere in which a child breathes. It is the involuntary and unconscious language of its parents, and of all those by whom it is surrounded, and is not conveyed by set speeches and lectures. It is the words which the young hear fall from their seniors, when *the speakers are off their guard;* and it is by these unconscious expressions that the child interprets the hearts of his parents. *That* is education: the thing we are DARKLY AIMING AT in the school movement of the present day."

G. A. S.

ON TEACHERS AND TEACHING.

A DIFFICULT, but not one of the most difficult of attainments, is the ability to teach in a profitable and interesting manner. As has been lately shown, the teaching may be excellent, while the learning on the part of the scholars is anything but satisfactory. But the teaching in the day school and the teaching in the Sunday School are two different things, and require teachers of a different stamp. For

while in the day school the teacher may be an adept at instructing his pupils in the various branches of knowledge, in the Sunday School a different atmosphere would seem to surround him. Here in the Sunday School we teach in no fear of an inspector, no fear that we shall lose in a money point of view if our scholars fall below the standard set up; and in most cases we have no fear of any interference, except the interference of a wise and loving pastor, anxious for the well-being of the lambs of his flock. With day schools we now have nothing to do, although we are far from believing that the pages of this Magazine would be an improper place in which to remark upon the religious education given in day schools.

The first thing that strikes us as we observe Sunday School teachers is, that almost all engaged in the work are untrained. From this it will not be surprising to find how varied are the attainments of teachers. Some you may find who in life's busy scenes are classed among the lofty in genius, and some in the same busy scenes are unknown. In the school they meet, each with the same aim, and each depending for success upon the same Almighty power. The aims of Sunday teachers are indeed high. What is it to sit Sunday by Sunday in the little square of young folks? Not to amuse only; not to keep them from the streets and from mischief only; not surely to pass away an idle hour or two; not surely that we may stand well in the eyes of our brethren of the Church. No, no; it is that we may plant the seed which shall spring up and grow until a harvest of everlasting life may be gathered in. It is that we may unfold to the listening few the wondrous story of God's love to man; of the Redeemer's sufferings for man's salvation; of the bright mansions that all may reach who will live godly in this present world. How to do this is indeed a question worthy of much consideration. We rejoice that many are doing it; that before the church bells sound so cheerfully over cities, towns, and villages, wherever those bells are, a little band has been gathered together, to listen to the voice of love and mercy, to sing and pray, and read God's Word.

In a Sunday School much has to be taught, and yet that much lies in a narrow compass, the Bible. We do not say teachers are to use no other book, but the Bible contains the heart of the whole matter, and any other book used must be always subordinate to the Bible. The first thing generally in the Sunday School is reading, and a very important matter it is. It does not, in our opinion, fall to the Sunday teacher's lot to teach this, and yet he can hardly let a Sabbath pass without in a greater or less degree doing it. For instance: that portion of Scripture which is to form the subject of the lesson, must be read. And we would impress upon all teachers the great necessity that exists for being careful that each child read his part with per-

fect accuracy. Let there be no slovenliness in reading; it will be fatal to the success of your teaching if allowed. The boy or girl who reads inaccurately will most surely fail to catch the meaning of what is read. When you hear a child call testify, "satisfy," prepared, "papered," and so on, how can that child get at the root of the matter upon which you are teaching? So then, although teaching to read does not fall within your sphere of labour, accuracy in reading does. But some will ask, how could we insist upon accuracy in very young children? Where a school is properly furnished with books and other requisites there will be no difficulty. There are "Sheets," containing simple lessons in simple words; and there are picture lessons containing glorious stories in a picture, and the reading below. If these are not to be had, there are small books, but to these we should prefer the teacher's *gift of speech*, that marvellous gift by which senates are hushed, and the smallest village school is held in silent awe as the Bible is unfolded in a tongue which even they can understand. In all reading, then, let perfection be your aim. The lesson read, what follows? Not surely the putting of the Bible on one side, but, "Turn to the first verse again," and then, with the subject fresh upon the scholars' minds, the teacher may do his part, but he may not do all; only a part, for if he do not allow the children to do something, they may soon grow weary and listless. Suppose your lesson is the raising of the widow's son at Nain. After the passage has been carefully read, the teacher would gather up the threads of the Gospel narrative by glancing at the preceding day's work of the Saviour at Capernaum; thence follow Him on his way to Nain, and picture out the scene as it must have presented itself to one who saw the band of disciples with their Master on that memorable day. The Jewish city, the manner and place of burial might be sketched, briefly contrasting them with the manners of our own country. The widow and her sympathising, but helpless friends, come next under review; and then the Saviour, who went about doing good, meets the mournful procession, and stops it, and, with a word, calls the young man back to life. Then will follow the effect the miracle had on the people, their remarks, and their apparent sincerity, to be compared with St. Luke xvi. 29—31. Of course this is not to be taken as a complete lesson, but as the merest skeleton of what a lesson on such a subject would be. And all this should be done with a little reference to book; not much, as it tends to rob the teacher of that liveliness of manner which is so essential. We may add that all references should be found and read by the children, when they are of age sufficient. This, and a few judicious questions, will keep up their attention, and will fix the subject on their minds.

In the afternoon many schools attend Church. This of necessity limits the school-time very much, and how to make a wise use of that short time is a matter of some importance. Say the whole time is only forty minutes; fifteen will be occupied in prayers, singing, and marking registers, leaving only twenty-five for the lesson. If books are to be given out and collected, the time available for actual teaching is very short indeed. We would recommend in such cases that teachers should well prepare themselves to give an oral lesson. As classes are usually small in Sunday schools, this may be done very quietly. Say you wish to present your scholars with a connected history of Abraham, or any Scripture character. Get the leading points of the life clearly arranged in your mind, and then, using your own language, relate the events of the life, commenting on this or that portion as may seem advisable. Very great interest may be profitably kept up, and a spirit of inquiry often awakened by this method. Where hymns are learned, perhaps part of the time might be occupied in hearing them, while verses of Scripture are better said in the morning. Whatever may be learned, let teachers exercise a special care that the lessons be not too long. It is most uncomfortable for the superintendent when a boy is handed over to him as one who will not say his lesson, to find on looking at the lesson, that it might profitably have extended over three Sundays, instead of being appointed for one. Another and more serious disadvantage is that, when too much is required none is obtained, and (worse than all) the teacher is defeated. In such matters ever remember that you are dealing with children whose minds are often unused to much exercise, and that what might prove a straw only in your path may be a mountain in theirs. In addition to these lessons, in some classes we have Catechism and Collect, but we would fain hope not all on one day. Catechism should not be neglected, but it is a subject so difficult to handle, that few can teach it profitably, or even so as to make it understood. The Collect should be confined to the higher classes, where the peculiarity of many of the words used can be understood. Here, then, we have jotted down a few things which seem worthy of a little attention as to what should be taught in our schools, and in doing this we have trespassed somewhat upon the next part of our subject, namely,—

Manner. How different seems the success which awaits upon the efforts of different teachers! "Sir," Mr. A. says, "I cannot manage B., he must leave my class." And so B., who has really been a most troublesome child, is transferred to Mr. C,, and then, what a change! The hitherto irreclaimable "Arab" is the gentlest and most attentive of all lads; is never late, never absent, always knows his lesson, and is a pleasure to all. How comes this great change

about? The boy cannot be supposed to have been changed in his nature simply by being transferred from one class to another; and so we must look to other causes, and generally the superintendent, who observes carefully teachers as well as boys, can give a very satisfactory account of the matter. If you ask him, he will confidentially tell you that Mr. A. was sometimes passionate; that he would occasionally so far forget himself as to box a boy's ears; that at times he seemed not to remember the weaknesses and follies of the lads, and to expect more from them than they could give; that now and then he would scold, and get behind them to drive them forward, instead of going before to lead and entice them to follow him in that better path which he was most anxious they should tread. The result was, B. could not be managed at all, while another boy, D., left the school after receiving a slight blow from the hasty hand of his teacher. On no account should corporeal punishment be permitted in a Sunday school. Try all methods, but never strike. At times there is great provocation, but do not strike; rather look upon the troublesome child as one who cannot be got rid of without danger to an immortal soul, but who may, in God's own due time, bear you much fruit. And then, when you strike, how unlike Him who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; who bore taunts and trials far more severe than any we can be called to bear, and yet endured all without even a murmur passing his lips. This subject might be placed in other lights. It makes an unpleasant sensation in a room, and destroys the harmony of the day; it places the superintendent in an awkward position; he may be slow to interfere because, although A. is not all he could wish as a teacher, he is a devout Christian; and, besides, there is no other to take his place; and then A. falls in the estimation of the school. Scholars never reverence, nor yet love, but may fear him, and that is a bar to his usefulness. The next teacher is E., who, unfortunately for his own comfort, has no idea of discipline. His heart is entirely in his work, and he is never so well pleased as when going to school or talking of matters connected with the school. But when at school he hardly ever gets a quiet moment. The boys admire him, they will, to the dismay of the superintendent, follow him about the room soliciting favours. If he scold, they only look at him with a countenance that seems to say "is that our teacher?" But the frown vanishes, and license, withdrawn for an instant, again is supreme. No boy ever willingly left E's class to go to a higher, because he knew how sadly the liberty of the subject would be curtailed by the step, and that the additional honour would but ill repay him for laxer discipline lost. This ought not to be. E. is beloved by all his fellow teachers as well as by his scholars, and yet even his class is not quite satisfactory. The next

on our list is F. When F. goes to his class a happy class it seems. They are all there, and all ready for him. How is this? When a boy is absent, F. never rests until he knows why. And to get at this he does not simply enquire of the boys present, but *goes himself* to the parents. That is his plan to ensure a regular attendance, and as far as our experience goes, no better plan has been devised. Parents are always civil, and always seem pleased to see the teacher—how can they be otherwise? He, at all events, has no selfish ends. Not only does he go to school, which to some teachers might seem sufficient, but he seeks the children out of school-hours, an additional proof, if any be wanted, that he is sincere in his endeavours to do them good. And then how quiet is that class of F's! No disturbance—but all goes on smoothly, and all seem happy, teacher and boys seem as though, had time permitted, they would have gone on for another hour.

Before we close we would say a few words more upon the subject of visiting absentees. Absentees are of various kinds. There is the boy who will not come; who prefers the fields on Sunday morning to the school, probably unknown to his parents. The cure for this is *visiting*. Whenever you miss a boy once, visit; never let his absence be marked on your register twice, unless you know the cause of it. A visit at once will generally cure the evil, while, if the visit be delayed, the bad habit will grow, and the child may become irreclaimable. Again, absence may arise from want of thought on the part of the parents; they may not see the need for such regularity as you require, and so to keep the children at home on Sunday morning is but a small matter. But when the teacher looks at it in a light sufficiently serious to induce him to go and seek those children, the parents are soon brought round and the children come to school. Absence may arise from illness—how can a teacher neglect this? What would his feelings be if the child were to die without a visit from him? When the children are absent he cannot be certain of the cause without going to see. It may be they have been led astray; it may be parents are negligent; it may be sickness or death; whatever it is, the teacher's duty is plain. It is due to the child as well as to the school that every absentee should be looked up. If this were done our Sunday School would wear a different aspect. Its tone would be more quiet, its forms better filled, and others would not be pained by seeing so many children wandering about on Sunday, when they ought to be at the School or the Church.

E. M. C.

The Teacher in his School.

NOTES FOR THE PREPARATION OF A LESSON OR ADDRESS FOR GOOD FRIDAY.

DEAR CHILDREN,

Though you are still young, some among you may, perhaps, have been present at that solemn and awe-inspiring scene, a death-bed; if so, you know how anxiously listened to at the time, and how subsequently treasured in the memory, is every word which falls from lips we are expecting, moment by moment, death to close for ever.

Death is a subject on which historian, poet, and painter frequently dwell. History tells how, in far distant lands, the soldier fights and dies; the poet's heart-stirring strains immortalize his deeds of fame; and the painter's skilful brush depicts vividly, and often with painful fidelity, the closing scenes of the hero's death. Some of you may remember how, eight years ago, when at war with Russia, our soldiers endured the rigours of a Crimean winter, and the many privations and hardships inseparable from a long siege, with uncomplaining fortitude; and still fresher in your memory must be the terrible Indian Mutiny of 1857, when our few European troops, though fearfully outnumbered by the enemy, performed acts of daring valour: historian, poet, and painter vie with each other in handing them down to posterity.

And yet, dear children, the most thrilling tales of heroic resistance, patient endurance, and uncomplaining fortitude fall short of the pathos which attaches to the story of Calvary—and why? Is it not because the death of the man Christ Jesus, the Great Captain of our salvation, is intended as an example to us, as good soldiers of the Cross, pledged to a manful warfare against sin, the world, and the devil, if we would continue faithfully fighting under his banner to our lives' end. And specially on this day on which our Church invites us to commemorate our Saviour's death let us dwell on his dying words.

Seven times during that terrible six hours' agony was His voice heard.

1st. "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

The uncomplaining Victim, the sinless Lamb of God is led to the slaughter. Mute as a sheep before her shearers, no word of suffering escapes his lips, as in the midst of an infuriated multitude He reaches Golgotha. The stern Roman soldiers, accustomed to scenes of bloodshed, pursue their cruel work, and, amid the mocking of soldiers, the reviling of priests, the hooting of the populace, and the bewailing of women, the nails are driven home. Then the pale, closed lips part, and distinctly heard above the din of angry voices, and the strokes of the descending hammer, is the melting word "forgive." The doctrine of forgiveness with which He commenced his ministry (Matt. v. 44) is at last sealed with his blood. Surely the mind which was in Christ Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, ought to be in us, his soldiers, that we may be the children of his Father and our Father, who is in heaven.

2nd. "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

Long before the Saviour was born, God foretold, by the mouth of his holy prophet Isaiah, not only the manner of his death, but each circumstance attendant upon it. The very men who crucified Him had often heard them read in their synagogues; but their hearts were too hard to

comprehend the full meaning of the mournful words. He was numbered with the transgressors; He made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death, Isaiah liii. And, ignorantly, they fulfilled the Scripture, when on Calvary they crucified Him, "and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left," Luke xxiii. 33.

As we think upon this scene, which the most vivid fancy can but feebly pourtray, our thoughts rest upon the centre figure of the group; and as we note each different particular of His agony, we more fully realise the greatness of our sins. How varied are the details of the sufferings the Saviour underwent as "He bore our iniquities." His justifying blood, as it flows from head, hands, side, and feet, wounded for our transgressions, not only supplies the needed stream to cleanse our sins, but also the needed balm to heal our wounds; and as He hangs bleeding on the Cross, we behold not only the Good Shepherd, giving his life for the sheep, but also the Good Shepherd supplying from his own wounds the balm more precious than that of Gilead, by which alone the health of the daughter of his people is recovered, Jer. viii. 22.* And plainly visible, in spite of the streaming blood, are the bruises made by the scourgings of Pilate. The bruises were for "our iniquities," by "his stripes we are healed;" and they are typified to us by the sweet spices† of the sanctuary, the pure perfume of which went up continually before God in the Holy of Holies, where He, from time to time, met the High Priest. But mark the preparation which these spices, sweet though they were in themselves, had to undergo before they were used for the incense. They were pounded very small, Ex. xxx. 34—38, and the fragrant odour they possessed was thus completely brought out; so, likewise, the Saviour's undeserved bruises, which He bore with such meek fortitude, brought out the fulness of his merits, which form the pure and holy perfume of the rich incense in which God smells a sweet savour of rest. And the Lord of life and glory has two companions in the shameful death He is enduring, guilty sinners. How different is their respective conduct! One, in impotent rage, rails because the Saviour will not save him from his agonising death; the other, meekly recognising the justice of the punishment he is receiving at the hands of man, turns to Jesus for mercy on his soul. Nor does he look in vain. True, it is the eleventh hour, but he receives as full a salvation as if he had borne the burden and heat of the day; for the same gracious voice which had in the full vigour of life, declared, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life," now speaks to the penitent thief the re-assuring words "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt Thou be with me in Paradise." The whole strength of the promise is in the *I*. And who is the *I*? God Himself.

3rd. "Woman, behold thy son; . . . behold thy mother."

We have here the purest exhibition of a woman's love, in its almost unmatched fortitude. The Saviour's mother stood by his Cross; and though the iron does, indeed, enter into her soul as she experiences the truth of the prophetic words of the aged Simeon, Luke ii. 35, yet she stands by, comforting as only a mother can, Isa. lxvi., every feature displaying sorrow, sympathy, and love. The beloved disciple is there also, and to him, who had leaned on his breast, John xiii. 23, and had thereby felt most of his love, the dying Saviour bequeaths his mother. He, as it were, substitutes one to fill a

* It may not be uninteresting to say that the Hebrew word for *balm* is taken from the root to *wound*. Balm really means something obtained by wounding.

† *Spices* is, in like manner, a Noun, obtained from the Hebrew root to *bruise*.

void which He never will again be able to do; for during the forty days He was on earth, after his resurrection, the things pertaining to the kingdom of God would seem to have exclusively occupied his mind. Dear children, with his dying breath, the commandment the Saviour honoured on the Cross was that which tells us to honour parents. In what high esteem He must have held it!

4th. "Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani." "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

A fearful and mysterious darkness covered the earth for three hours, and that at just the brightest part of the day. At the ninth hour, the Saviour, in the very extremity of his agony, uttered these heart-rending words; the Lord had, indeed, "laid on Him the iniquity of us all;" and the intensity of the weight may be judged from this exclamation. He was the offering for our sins; and how fearful must have been their exceeding sinfulness, when the righteous soul of the pure and holy Jesus is thus cast down within Him. Constantly during the Saviour's earthly career He had been cheered and encouraged by some direct manifestation of his Father's love; at his Baptism, Matt. iii. 16, 17; at his Transfiguration, Matt. xvii. 5; and again, shortly before his agony. What wonder, at the last dread moment, when the Father's face was obscured, He faints for the light of His countenance. How terrible is the hiding of his face from his people; and equally how terrible to his enemies is the regard which He casts at them. The first is illustrated in Ps. x. 1; civ. 29; xxxiv. 15; Jer. xxiv. 6. To the wicked, on the contrary, God's eye is a source of disquiet; as with the Egyptians, Ex. xiv. 24; and it will be in the last day to the finally impenitent, Rev. vi. 16.

5th. "I thirst."

These two simple words were uttered in fulfilment of Scripture, John xix. 28. In Ps. lxix. 21, the vinegar and gall are foretold. It is worthy of notice, that the very sensation of thirst was an indication that both the mental and physical agony had greatly abated; for it is a known fact that whilst either are at their height the animal wants of the body are for the time unfelt and unnoticed. Special communion with Jehovah was the immediate object of each recorded instance of the forty days' seclusion, Ex. xxiv. 19; 1 Kings xix. 8—18; Matt. iv. God doubtless meant to teach that man does not live by bread alone, &c.

There was a refinement of cruelty in the mode in which the Jews responded to our Lord's cry. Vinegar was refreshing, and in the hot climate of Judea was in frequent use. See Boaz's permission to Ruth, Ruth ii. 14. And it would seem, lest they should be too merciful, they mingled gall, thereby rendering it too rancorous even for Him, who had endured many hours of agony beneath a burning thirst, to touch, Matt. xxvii. 34. How ignorantly, in their blind rage, were they fulfilling the prophecies.

6th. "It is finished."

The Saviour's perfect work is now over, and as, step by step, we trace his career, from the manger in Bethlehem to the Golgotha, where He died, we find Him ever obedient; and when He used these words He intended to tell us all that *we* could add nothing to his perfect work. And what was the work which the Father had given Him to do, and which He had so perfectly executed in John v. 30, and vi. 38? He says it was to do the will of Him that sent Him, and He proved what had been told by the prophet Samuel 1 Sam. xv 22. And it is surely well for us to be up and doing, that at our death we may be enabled to say *we* have finished the work which our Father has given us to do. And what is it Jesus tells us? John vi. 29. It

seems easy, but faith in God's dispensations throughout our lives, however hard they may appear, is not an easy grace to acquire; and well is it for us that our grounds of acceptance will be the *Saviour's finished work, and not our own.*

7th. "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit."

How calm is the resignation here expressed. The silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl broken, Eccles. xii. 6, 7; and though the bruised body, with its pierced feet, hands, and side, never saw corruption, still the Saviour commends his Spirit into the hands of Him who gave it; whilst the spirits of all flesh *return* to God, only his followers can have the privilege of *commending* their spirits to Him. We find St. Stephen, the first martyr, imitating his Saviour.

Surely, in the Saviour's dying words, his twofold nature, as God and man, is exhibited; and by a careful consideration of his death, we shall be enabled more perfectly to understand the sentences of the Athanasian Creed, which we shall repeat on Easter Sunday. "Perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting, equal to the Father as touching his Godhead, and inferior to his Father as touching his manhood."

S. B.

[The general treatment of the subject in these Notes is excellent; but for either a Lesson or Address to Children the language employed is often far too high for their comprehension, and would render much that is good in itself unintelligible to those for whose instruction it is intended.—EDITORS.]

A LESSON FOR A SENIOR CLASS ON THE CHARACTER OF JEREMIAH.

T. THE character which we shall study to-day, is that of Jeremiah. In order to be able to form a correct judgment of the individuals whose characters have lately been passing before us, we have on other occasions found it useful to look first into the general history of the person, and then to trace out the points of character by which they were distinguished, as examples or as warnings. Following this plan, let me hear what you can tell me of Jeremiah?

Scholars. He was a prophet.

T. Do you know where he was born? (No answer.)

T. Turn to the 1st chapter of his prophecy, and you will obtain some information respecting him. Read the first three verses. (Girls read.)

T. Now tell me his birthplace?

S. Anathoth.

T. Anathoth was a city of the priests,—in what tribe was it?

S. The tribe of Benjamin.

T. Do you know the situation of the possession of Benjamin on the map?

S. North of Judea.

T. Yes; here is a map shewing the division of the land between the tribes.

S. Here is Benjamin, and there is Anathoth.

T. Tell me now what station of life did Jeremiah fill?

S. He was a priest.

T. And in the reigns of what kings did he live?

S. Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah.

T. Besides these, there were two others, Jehoahaz, who succeeded Josiah, and Jehoiakin, son of Jehoiakim, who each reigned only three months, and are not mentioned in this chapter of Jeremiah. What was the character of Josiah, in whose reign Jeremiah began to prophecy?

S. His heart was tender.—He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord.

T. Yes; his character and influence were such that the progress of evil in the nation of Israel was checked for a time. But his sons,—can you tell me anything of them?

S. They were all wicked.

T. Yes; the kings and the people alike forsook God, and what was the result?

S. They were carried captive to Babylon.

T. Turn to 2 Chron. xxxvi. and read from the 11th to the 16th verses, and you will see how all classes were alike guilty, and how God's holiness and justice called for punishment.

(Girls read.)

T. You observe then the kind of times in which the prophet lived. They were times of prevailing sin and ungodliness,—what would be his special duty?

S. To tell them of their wickedness.

T. Yes; and to warn them of God's coming judgments; and such we find to be the subjects of his prophecies, mingled with the deepest sorrow, and many promises of mercy. Do you remember any remarkable circumstances in the life of Jeremiah?

S. His meeting with the Rechabites. He was put into a dungeon and delivered by Ebedmelech.

T. If you will turn again to the first chapter of his prophecies you will see the account of his call to be the Lord's prophet.

(Girls read chap. i. 4—10.)

T. The prophet hesitates at first, and what does he call himself?

S. A child.

T. Yes, but God repeats his commission, and gives him a gracious promise and a sign;—what were they?

S. "He touched his mouth," and promised "I am with thee to deliver thee."

T. Here is encouragement for us, when we have an opportunity to speak for God. We must not say, 'I am too young, too weak, too ignorant,' but remembering it is God's work, we should depend on his promise and his strength. It is often by weak instruments that God does great things, that He may shew the work is all his own.

It would occupy us too long to trace out all the principal events in the life of Jeremiah. I will give you the chapters, where they are to be found, and if you will make a note of them, or put markers in your Bibles, you will find it interesting to refer to them at home. The 1st chapter we have already looked into; in the 13th there is an account of an emblematic journey to the Euphrates; the 20th, 26th, 27th, and 28th, relate the persecutions which Jeremiah suffered from the apostate nobles of Judah; the story of the Rechabites, with which you are familiar, is in the 35th; in the 40th we read of the kind treatment of the Babylonian captain, and the prophet's choice to stay with the Jews that were left behind in their own land; the 42nd contains an appeal to that remnant not to go down to Egypt, and the 43rd his compulsory exile thither. Do you know the meaning of compulsory?

S. He could not help himself.

T. There is another word with something of the same sound which perhaps you have often heard?

S. Do you mean compelled?

T. Yes; the meaning of that?

S. Obliged to do anything.

T. You will find among the chapters I have mentioned many striking scenes of his ministry to a "rebellious people;" but passing now from the circumstances of the prophet's life, let us see what we can gather respecting his character. There is generally a peculiarly mournful tone running through the prophecies of Jeremiah:—can you think of any reason why this should be the case?

S. He mourned because the people were so wicked.

T. And what did their wickedness bring upon them?

S. God's anger. Punishment.

T. He grieved, then, both for their sin, and the miseries it brought upon them. What kind of disposition do you think would be most likely to feel very deeply for the woes of others?

S. A kind disposition.

T. There is a word we often use to express a quick feeling for the sorrows of others, can you give it me?

S. Sympathising.

T. Can you think of any other expression, with the same meaning?

S. Benevolent. Tender-hearted.

T. Yes; there was much in the times in which Jeremiah lived to make any right-minded person sad, but he seems to have been a tender-hearted man, one upon whom the sins and miseries which he saw every where around him took especial effect. When therefore he thought of his nation's sin and punishment,—what was that punishment?

S. To be sent away from their own land.

T. Yes, and besides this their glorious temple to be profaned, and all the horrors of famine and war;—when he thought of all this, what would he do?

S. Grieve for them. Sympathise with them.

T. He did so most truly, though the suffering was caused by their own sin. In this he was an example for us;—can you tell me how?

S. It shews us we should feel for others, and even when they have done wrong.

T. There are some striking passages which bring out the tenderness of his heart very strongly. Turn to the 8th chapter and read from the 18th to the 21st verses. (Girls read.) Now the 9th chapter and 1st verse.—And again the 14th chapter and 17th verse. (Girls read.) What does he especially speak of in the last two verses you have read?

S. His tears.

T. Yes, and on this account and because of the Lamentations which, as you know, he wrote, Jeremiah has sometimes been called the weeping prophet. But the prophet's grief sometimes broke out into bitterness, what does this shew to us?

S. That he was not perfect.

T. No, there is only *one* whose example we may follow in *every* particular. What are the words in which our Lord expressed *his* grief for Israel's sin, and coming judgment?

S. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."

T. What is the Apostolic command to shew sympathy or fellow-feeling? (No answer.)

T. Turn to Rom. xii. 15. (Girls read.)

T. This is what Jeremiah did, though the suffering was caused by sins committed against light. If we see those around us going on in sin, what is our duty?

S. To warn them. To grieve over them.

T. Yes, if we truly love one another we cannot with *indifference* see our fellow-creatures going down to destruction, any more than we should or could stand by and see them on the very edge of a fearful precipice, and make no effort to draw them away. There may be a difference in natural temperament, some may be more easily affected by sorrow than others, but if we have been taught by the Spirit of God to mourn for our own sins, and to take them in penitence and faith to Him, whose "blood cleanseth from all sin," then we cannot look carelessly at the sins of others, nor coldly on the sorrows which follow those sins. I have read of a man, a scoffer and an infidel, who long resisted every effort which had been made for his good, but at length he heard his name uttered in the fervent prayer of a

fellow workman, and saw tears flowing on his behalf, and this by God's grace melted his heart and he became "a new creature." So, dear friends, if you cannot *say* much for God, mourn for the sins of others, and lay them before God in prayer, and you shall be blessed and a blessing. And this leads us on to another point in the prophet's character. Where do you think a tender-hearted child of God would go for help and comfort?

S. He would pray. He would go to the throne of grace.

T. Yes, what is God's own command to his people in the day of trouble?

S. "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me."

T. And a New Testament command to the same effect?

S. "Be careful for nothing," &c.

T. Yes, the child of God in the midst of abounding sin, would indeed be cast down if it were not for the privilege of communion with God. As a beautiful hymn says:—

> "Oh whither should we fly for aid,
> When tempted, desolate, dismayed;
> Or how the hosts of hell defeat,
> Had suffering saints no Mercy seat!"

Jeremiah in the midst of all his troubles turned to God in faith and prayer, for light, and instruction, and strength. Perhaps you can give me some other examples to illustrate this habit of communion with God in which Jeremiah lived?

S. Hannah, the mother of Samuel.

T. Yes, she took her grief to God, and what was the result?

S. "She went away and her countenance was no more sad."

T. And what further?

S. God granted her request.

T. We may just refer again to our perfect pattern, our blessed Lord. With a heart more tender than that of Jeremiah, and the full knowledge of coming woe far more dreadful than that of which the prophet spoke, where as man, did He look for strength and support?

S. In prayer. At the throne of grace.

T. Yes; after days of labour, and of rebuke and scorn, "every man went to his own house," but Jesus, where did He go?

S. Unto a mountain to pray. "Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives."

T. Do you, then, dear girls, take for your example the prophet, and the prophet's Lord. When you see others do wrong, instead of speaking of it abroad, go and tell Jesus. Ask his forgiveness for those who have sinned, and for a better mind that they may sin no more. And when you are in difficulty or trouble, and I know you have troubles,—some at home, some in service, some in the work-room,—take it all to God, He encourages us to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and what else?

S. "Grace to help in time of need."

T. This reminds us of one more feature in the character of Jeremiah. In continual danger, persecuted, hated, what would he deeply need?

S. Courage. Strength.

T. Yes; and living as we have seen he did in close and constant fellowship with God, what would you expect to find him?

S. Courageous. Strong.

T. Can you think of any other word for courageous?

S. Brave.

T. People are sometimes called brave who are self-confident and proud of their superior strength. What expression of the prophet's, which we have already referred to in the first chapter of his prophecy, shows that his was a different kind of courage?

S. "Oh, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child."

T. Now, if you will read for me from the 7th to the 10th verse of the same chapter, you will see what made him brave. (Girls read.)

T. By whom was he sent?

S. By God.

T. What was he to speak?

S. Whatsoever God commanded him.

T. And how was he encouraged?

S. By God's promise, "I am with thee to deliver thee."

T. Well might Jeremiah quit himself like a man, and be strong, sent as he was to do God's work, with God's words in his mouth, and His promise as a shield around him. There is nothing like communion with God for taking away the "fear of man which bringeth a snare." Perhaps some of you have seen the anecdote of the old Christian Scotchwoman who was visited by our beloved Queen, and on being afterwards asked if she was not afraid to speak to one so far above her, replied, "I have been used to speak for too many years to the King of Kings, that I should fear to speak to that gracious lady." You remember the lines, do you not?

"Fear Him, ye saints, and you will then,
Have nothing else to fear."

But though Jeremiah was thus strengthened for his painful work, he had much to endure. He was often in danger of losing his life, yet he stood firm; he called upon God in the day of trouble, and what promise did he find fulfilled?

S. "I will deliver thee."

T. Turn to the 38th chapter, and read from the 7th to the 10th verses, and you will find the proof of this.

(Girls read.)

T. And again, the 36th chapter and 26th verse.

(The verse is read.)

T. And now, in gathering up the points of our Lesson, let me ask you the *reason* for the name given to Jeremiah, the *weeping prophet*?

S. He wept for the sins of his people.

T. For their *sins* only?

S. No, for their sorrows also.

T. If I ask you to describe to me his character in a few words, how would you give it me?

S. He was a feeling man: he was tender-hearted.

T. Yes, we will let this stand as his first characteristic, or point by which is character may be distinguished. He *was a tender-hearted man*. Another feature?

S. He was a prayerful man. He held communion with God.

T. Yes; *he lived in constant communion with God*. There was his strength obtained; for what else have we marked in his character?

S. He was courageous: he was a brave man.

T. Just so; then we may describe him as a tender-hearted, prayerful, and brave man. Now to close, tell me that promise of our Lord which He gives to those who mourn aright?

S. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

T. Yes; those who mourn not only for sorrow, but for the sins which brought that sorrow into the world, for their own sins, for the sins of others, for the anguish and misery which sin has caused, "they shall be comforted;" their own sins shall be blotted out, they shall be the instruments of doing good to others, and in their tribulations they shall have peace, till they come to the land where there shall enter "nothing that defileth," and from which "sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Take, then, my dear girls, this question home with you, and ask it, each one of her own heart, "Do I know anything of mourning like this?" And if conscience whispers that you have never yet grieved for your own sin, much less for the sin of others, then remember that Jesus is exalted to "give repentance and forgiveness of sins," and ask of God the gift of that blessed Spirit, whose office it is to convince of sin, and to comfort by leading the soul to Jesus; and then you will know what that means, "sorrowful yet alway rejoicing;" yes, "your sorrow shall be turned into joy," and

"When we have reached that heavenly shore,
Where sin shall never tempt or grieve,
Then we shall mourn and weep no more,
But joy of penitence take leave."

E. D. P.

LESSONS ON THE LITURGY, FOR BIBLE CLASSES.

LESSON XV.

The Te Deum.

Between and after the Lessons from Scripture, Hymns are appointed to be said or sung by the Congregation, the object of this arrangement being to secure them against weariness and distraction, by the variety thus produced, and to supply them with proper words in which to bless God, for the benefits they receive in hearing his Word.

After the first Lesson from the old Testament, comes the very beautiful hymn called the Te Deum. This title, as well as those given to the other hymns and psalms in the Prayer Book, are the words in which they commenced in the Latin Liturgies formerly in use, when the people of Rome and most other places (at the time when the Roman Empire extended over the known world) understood Latin, and so could join in the use of these hymns.

The Te Deum is said to have been composed by Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, in the fourth century, on the occasion of the baptism of St. Augustine; by others it is ascribed to Nicetus, who lived a century later. It is a beautiful hymn of praise (for hymns are not always in rhyme), full of the feeling of a heart deeply sensible of God's greatness and goodness, and desiring earnestly to supplicate the daily renewal of the divine grace.

The verses are not numbered, but we can easily do this, and the better to understand it, we shall divide the Hymn into three parts, to form as many Lessons;—

I.—Verse 1—13. Praise to the Triune God.
II.—Verse 14—21. Praise and prayer to Christ.
III.—Verse 22—29. General prayer to God.

I. The first ten verses are addressed to God, not specifying either One of the Three Holy Persons: and verses 11 to 13 speak of each One. So here is recognised the Trinity in Unity, which we speak of in the Athanasian Creed, and in the Collect for Trinity Sunday: see 1 John iii. All these verses speak of praise to be given to the Triune God by several different persons.

1. By us—*we* praise Thee. So we well may, for who can tell how great things He has done for us? And what do we acknowledge God to be? The Lord, *i.e.*, Master or Ruler. Notice, *the* Lord: there is none other. See Deut. vi. 4.

2. By all the earth. So Ps. viii. 1. It means here that all things which God has made, show forth his praise. Wicked men do not love or praise God; but the time will come when this verse will be true of all people. Read Ps. lxvi. 4; Is. xi. 9.

3. By the angels, the heavens, and all the powers (*i.e.*, the powerful beings) in them: and by the Cherubin and Seraphin—the former word used here either as names of angels, or of the mysterious beings described in Ezek. i. and x. The Seraphin are angels—the word meaning burning or fiery. Very nearly answering to the words of the 5th verse, are those in Is. vi. 2, 3: the word Sabaoth is Hebrew for Hosts. Read also Rev. v. 2; Ps. ciii. 20; cxviii. 2.

4. By the glorious company of the Apostles, long since gone to their rest, and now in paradise. They are well called a glorious company: for though small in num-

bers they did more for the world than any other twelve men. What do *we* owe to them?

5. By the prophets: a goodly fellowship, words something like the glorious company. What do we owe to them? Isaiah for instance? They, too, praise God. And if we extend the meaning of the word prophets to its New Testament sense, as the preachers of the Gospel, it will still have a like application.

6. By the martyrs. Who was the first? We read of a large number of them in Hebrews xi. Why call them an army? Because, in one sense, they fight for the truth, though not with sword or spear. Read Rev. vi. 9; xii. 11. And why a noble army? For their numbers, and for their noble courage in giving up their lives for Christ.

7. By the holy Church—that is the true people of God—throughout all the world. Wherever God is known and loved, and wherever the offer of salvation purchased by Christ is received, there however many may be the languages of the converted heathen, they are all alike in spirit—they unite in acknowledging and praising God.

Thus do all acknowledge that God the father is possessed "of an infinite Majesty." None can tell how great He is: read Job xi. 7—and also remember the verse,

"How glorious is our heavenly king."

We next give praise to Christ, as the second person in the Holy Trinity. In verse 5, he is called "Holy," and in verse 2, "The Everlasting Father." Read Ps. xcix. 3; and Is. ix. 6. We call Him "honourable:" and who can give Him honour enough, for all his goodness and his love? for all his wisdom and providence? for all his power and might? See John v. 23; viii. 54; Heb. i. 6, 8, 9; 2 Pet. i. 17; Rev. iv. 11; v. 12.

He is "true," for Christ said of Himself, "I am the Truth," John xiv. 6; and read John i. 17. But it may mean also that Christ is *indeed*, and *truly* the Son of God. Read John iv. 42.

And we call Him the "Only Son." How can this be? We may become the sons of God, as we find in John i. 12. But if we read Gal. iv. 5, we can understand that Christians are God's children by *adoption* (*i.e.*, he chooses us to be his children), but Christ is the only-begotten Son of God. John i. 14; iii. 16.

The Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the ever blessed Trinity, is specially included in our praise, in verse 13. We call Him that which Jesus called Him—the Comforter, John xiv. 16, 17,; xvi. 7. And whom does He comfort? Those who mourn for their sins, Matt. v. 4.

Do we *heartily* join the "glorious company" of God's servants in thus giving Him the praise and honour due unto his name?

LESSON XVI.

Te Deum, *continued*.

We will now take verses 14 to 21 of this noble Hymn. We said they consisted of prayer and praise to Christ. Let us read them. First notice the names given to Christ.

I.—The King of glory, which means a glorious King.

II.—The Everlasting son of the Father.

1st. When He first came down on earth was it in glory? No; the Collect for Advent Sunday reminds us that he came "to visit us in great humility;" and St. Paul tells us that "He took on Him the form of a servant" (*i.e.*, man, the servant of God), and that "He humbled Himself;" see Phil. ii. 7, 8.

But did not He shew forth any glory then? Yes, in his miracles; read John ii. 11; and in his transfiguration, Matt. xvii. 1, 2; see also Luke iv. 15. In this sense his disciples saw his glory, John i. 14.

And did no one even then acknowledge Him as King? Yes, they did; see Matt. ii. 2—11; John i. 49; Acts xvii. 7.

But what is He now? Exalted and glorified, Acts ii. 33; Phil. ii. 9. So he appeared to St. John in Patmos, Rev. i. 11—18; and so He will appear to every one of us, at the last great day, Matt, xxv. 31.

He *had* that glory before He came down on earth, John xvii. 5; and He has now regained it, and will hereafter shew it to every one, 1 Pet. iv. 13; Jude 24.

2nd. The name of the Son of the Father is given to Christ, John i. 18, 34; Matt. xvi. 16; and that by God Himself, Matt. iii. 17. He is also described as Everlasting, Prov. viii. 23; Micah v. 2.

We then go on to say that Christ took upon him (or as we more usually say undertook) to deliver man; that is, it was a wondrous work, and He engaged to perform it. And in performing it He did not abhor (or count it too great a sacrifice or too dreadful a penalty) to be born as a man of the Virgin Mary.

See what we have said before as to his humbling Himself by becoming a man. How we ought to praise Him for this! Because, only thus could He take our sins upon Him—only as a man could He shed his blood and die, and unless He died for us, we could not be saved.

Again, in the 17th verse we speak of Christ as having overcome the sharpness of death. Death is a sharp or very painful thing. It is so to every one, more or less. Death is called the King of Terrors. But how dreadful were Christ's sufferings —the scourge, the crown of thorns, the cross! and, above all, the feeling that, *in our stead*, He was bearing his Father's anger, so that He even felt as if God had forsaken Him, Matt. xxvii. 46.

But this He overcame. Death could not make Him draw back, nor could the grave hold Him, Acts ii. 24. And by this victory He opened the kingdom of heaven to all who believe on Him.

We must believe on Him if we would be saved, Acts xvi. 31; Heb. xi. 6. For all who do so believe He has prepared a heavenly abode; see John xiv. 2, 3; 1 Thess. iv, 17.

Verse 18 reminds us of Ps. cx. 1, and Col. iii. 1.

Verse 19.—This we learn from many passages of Scripture; turn to 2 Tim. iv. 1; 1 Pet. iv. 5. If we really feel this, how carefully shall we prepare for that day!

Verses 20, 21.—"*Therefore;*" because Christ will come and judge us, we pray that He would "help us," for without that help we can do no one good thing; see Rom. vii. 18; 2 Cor. iii. 5.

Christ's blood is precious indeed, in the two meanings of that word, viz.: costly, and highly esteemed, 1 Pet. i. 19.

With whom do we pray to be numbered? With the saints of God, for whom He has prepared everlasting glory. Not like Judas, who *for a time* was numbered with the apostles, but yet was *lost*.

LESSON XVII.

TE DEUM, *concluded.*

We have now to consider verses 22 to 29, and as we read them over, we shall find that they are general prayers to God for many different mercies, mingled with praise, and an expression of our trust in Him.

This Hymn is chiefly one of praise, but it ends with prayer; and this may remind us, that as long as we are on earth, we shall have continual need of prayer. Past mercies for which we thank God, give us encouragement to ask Him for more. Only in heaven will *all* be praise.

Verse 22.—See the two names given here to those who love and serve God—they are called his people and his heritage. This verse is almost word for word with Ps. xxviii. 9.

1st.—*His* people. He made them—He saved them—so they are his, as He says in Is. xliii. 1; and his *people* because he is their King. He gives them that name Is. lxiii. 8.

2nd.—His heritage, or inheritance. A man's inheritance means his property, which he has received, and which belongs to him alone. This name is often given in the Bible to God's people, Ps. xciv. 5; Joel iii. 2; 1 Pet. v. 3.

Verse 23.—Here we ask two things for God's people.

1st. "Govern them." How much better this is, than choosing to govern ourselves! If God is our King, and we heartily obey Him, we shall find obedience to be both pleasant and safe. See what David prayed, Ps. cxix. 35; and what God promises, Jer. vii. 23.

2nd. "Lift them up for ever." What sort of lifting up is here meant? Riches and greatness? No; we must not pray for these, because they are not good for every one—they might do us harm; so Jesus forbids such desires, Matt. vi. 25–34. It is such lifting up as David means in Ps. xxviii. 9 (from which this verse is taken); Ps. xxvii. 6; xxx. 1; that is, not lifted up in pride, like Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. v. 20; but lifted up in safety (as a man stands upon a high rock whilst the waves are dashing at his feet); and lifted up *at last* in glory, for ever. See also Jas. iv. 10.

Verses 24, 25.—These speak of what we do (or ought to do) every day. To magnify God is to acknowledge his greatness, to praise Him; see an instance in 1 Chron. xxix. 11. Let us be careful that these words are true of us, and that we do *every day* praise God.

Verse 26 is again a prayer. In asking God to keep us from sin, we confess that we cannot keep ourselves; and how true this is! It is like David's prayer Ps. xvii. 5; cxix. 17.

Verses 27, 28, are a prayer for mercy. That prayer is repeated three times, as if to remind us how much we need mercy, and how earnestly we ought to seek it. "Lighten upon us," may mean either "light upon us," *i.e.*, come down upon us, 2 Sam. xvii. 12; or lighten as a light. Mercy is like light to a dark heart, Ps. xxxiii. 3.

Verse 29.—Can we truly say that we have trusted in God? If so, we shall never be confounded. What does that mean? People are confounded when they have put their trust in any person, or any thing, and it fails them. As if a sailor trusted in his ship, and when far away at sea, found a leak in it; or, as

if we took shelter from a storm under a shed or barn, and it fell down on us in ruins.

Can those who trust in God, ever be so disappointed? No. He cannot be unfaithful; He will save them to the very last; see Ps. xxii. 5; Isa. xlv. 17; l. 7; 1 Pet. ii. 6.

LESSON XVIII.

JUBILATE DEO:—PSALM C.

After the second Lesson, taken out of the New Testament, comes the 100th Psalm. (Read it responsively). This Psalm is an invitation to all people to praise God, and that especially in his house.

Let us notice,

I.—The invitation.

II.—The reasons.

1st. What are we here called on to do.

(*a*) To be joyful in the Lord. That means—to have, and to shew, *religious* joy. That joy is not like a worldly joy, which so often turns to disappointment, Eccles. xii. 1; or the delusive pleasures of sin, Heb. xi. 25. It is true happiness, and it lasts for ever, Ps. xvi. 11. And what makes the people of God happy? His mercy to them in pardoning their sins. So Jesus bade the paralytic rejoice, Matt. ix. 2.

(*b*) To serve the Lord with gladness. We serve God when we do his will, and it is part of his will that we should love his temple, and serve Him there; see Lev. xix. 30. And to go there ought to be a delight to us, Is. lviii. 13. It was so to David, Ps. xxvi. 8.

(*c*) To come before his presence with a song. To go into his gates and his courts, means just the same. The House of God is called the presence of God (*i.e.*, the place where He is especially present). Remember Jacob's words, Gen. xxviii. 16, 17. God is everywhere (Jer. xxiii. 24), but in his house He has especially promised to be present; see what is said of the Tabernacle, the Jewish Church, Ex. xxv. 22.

See also that singing is spoken of as part of the proper worship of God. So we find angels singing, Job xxxviii. 7; and glorified saints, Rev. v. 9; xiv. 3; xv. 3. Moses sang, Ex. xv. 1; the Jews sang in the temple service, 2 Chron. xxviii. 23; Paul and Silas sang, Acts xvi. 25. Above all, Jesus himself sang with his disciples, Matt. xxvi. 30.

(*d*) To be thankful to God, and to speak good of Him. We well may do so, for what goodness was ever like his? His love, like that of Christ, (which is, after all, the same) passeth understanding.

2nd. Let us think of the reasons given for these invitations.

Why should we so worship God?

(*a*) Because He hath made us. You can easily give texts for this.

(*b*) He is like a good shepherd to us, taking such care of us as a shepherd does of his sheep; see Ps. xxiii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 25; v. 4.

(*c*) He is gracious—He is merciful, and that for ever,—and his truth endureth from generation to generation (*i.e.*, without end). His truth enduring, means that He keeps his promises, 2 Cor. i. 20. Compare 1 Kings viii. 56.

Now notice *to whom* these invitations are addressed—to *all lands* (*i.e.*, to the people that dwell in all lands). Do all people now thus serve God? No: many are yet ignorant of Him (on which account we have our Missionary Societies). But one day it shall be so; see God's own promises, Is. xi. 9; Mal. i. 11.

Instead of this Psalm the *Benedictus* (from St. Luke i. 68—79) may be used at the choice of the Minister, which is a form of Thanksgiving to God for the incarnation of our Lord, and the blessings which resulted from it,—as this is an appeal to all nations to serve the Lord with gladness, and with gratitude for his grace and goodness proclaimed in the Gospel.

In the same manner a substitute is provided for the *Te Deum* in the Canticle, "Oh, all ye works of the Lord," &c., taken from the Apocrypha, which was an ancient Hymn of the Jewish Church, and is in part a paraphrase of the cxlviii. Psalm, appealing to all the elements and objects of universal nature, to ascribe praise to the Lord, and inviting us, who have the benefit of them, to take the foremost place among his worshippers.

Thus does our Church endeavour to supply its members with sufficient variety in its services, to prevent them from falling into weariness or distraction in their devotions.

LESSON XIX.

The Apostles' Creed.

Following the Lessons from God's word, and our thanksgivings for the truth it reveals, is the declaration of our Christian faith (Rom x. 17) in the Creed, or as it is sometimes called The Belief. The word Creed comes from a Latin word, *Credo*, or, I believe.

Notice who are to say the Creed—the minister and the people: they all join, to shew that they *all* profess to believe what is here set down.

This Creed is called the Apostles' Creed, not because we are sure that the apostles wrote it, but because it has been handed down to us from their times, or at least from those immediately following them. There are also two other Creeds—the Athanasian and the Nicene, which are introduced in other portions of the Church service.

To repeat the Creed is neither prayer nor praise. Some thoughtless people say it as if it were a prayer; but if we look at it, we shall see that it asks nothing of God—it thanks Him for nothing—it merely says what we believe.

Why should all say the Creed? There are several good reasons, which might be given, but two or three will be enough.

1st. We all profess to be Christians, and it is right to know what we mean by that. A Mahometan might *call* himself so, and many infidels have also called themselves by that name; and if there were no standard or test by which to try them, how could we deny them to belong to us? But when we call on them to repeat the Creed, neither of them can *sincerely* do so. The Mahometan does not believe Christ to be the Son of God—the infidel believes still less. So you see the Creed is a standard, which good and wise men fixed on, soon after the first rise of Christianity, to distinguish Christians from people of other religions.

2nd. It is one of the standards by which members of the Church of England

are distinguished. Most pious Dissenters *believe* the whole of the things in the Creed, but they seldom repeat it; but the good men who first formed, and those who reformed the Church of England, agreed that it should be part of her worship to repeat the Creed; and as the Creed is never changed it has a third use —*viz.*:

3rd. The Creed keeps successive generations of men to the same truths. I do not mean that we are sure to believe a thing because our fathers did, but I mean that it is a good thing for us to be saved from mistakes as to what they believed, and as to the truths which they found in the Bible.

4th. Only one more reason. What we believe does *(if we are sincere)* guide us in our conduct. So we repeat this Creed as a kind of pledge, not only of what we think, but of what we mean to do.

For instance—If I said of a boy in my service, I believe he is a thief, do you think I would leave my money lying about in his way? If I said, I believe it is raining heavily, would I put away my umbrella? It is quite true that many people do not act as if they really believed what they say they do, but that is because they are thoughtless and forgetful.

But you may ask where we find the Creed—Is it in the Bible? No, not the very words; but it is like a short summing up of many truths that are in the Bible. And let us hear what the Church says about this. The Eighth Article says that the three Creeds "ought thoroughly to be received and believed," and *why*? "for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture." The word "warrants," means here proofs; so that we may turn to the Bible for Scripture proofs of all that is here set down; and remember, that you are to believe these things not *because* they are in the Prayer Book, but because they can be *proved from* the Bible.

And what is meant by belief of anything? You do not say, I believe the fire is hot; or I believe ice is cold. These things you *know* to be true. But you might say, I believe the Torrid Zones of the earth to be hotter than England, and I believe the Arctic Regions to be extremely cold: these things you do not *know* of your own experience, but you hear or read that they are so, and you believe, though you cannot see.

Now much of religious truth must be believed, not seen; and this believing "for certain" is what is called faith. You cannot see God—no man ever has, 1 Tim. vi. 16. But you read of Him in the Bible and other books—you hear of Him—you see all around you what He has made and what He is doing; and so from all these, you feel certain that there is a God; or, in other words, you believe in Him.

LESSON XX.

The Apostles' Creed, *continued.*

We commence the Creed by saying that we "believe in God."

You may say, Every one does this. But David says differently; for read Ps. liii. 1. How can a man say, There is no God? You may well wonder at it; but some men have even said that they were not sure of their own existence!

Why do you believe that there are such men as bricklayers? Because you see buildings made of bricks. Why do you believe that some men can paint pic-

tures? Because you can see pictures, and you know that pictures do not paint themselves. Watches do not grow. I hold mine out now, and you know that a clever man must have made it. But look at my hand—its fingers, their joints, the skin, the nails—how easily my hand moves. I shut my eyes, but I can tell numbers of things by my touch. Is not my hand more cleverly made than the watch? If it took wisdom to make the watch, it took much more to make the watchmaker. But an infidel will say, he grew—one man is born after another. Yes, but who made the first man? *He* could not be born. An infidel once said in a child's hearing, that the world grew like a mushroom. The child asked *where the seed came from*. There can only be one answer—"I believe in God, the Maker of heaven and earth."

I. Let us just go over a very few of the many texts which speak of this truth. Read Gen. i. 1; Ps. viii. 3; cxlv. 6; Is. xl. 26; lxvi. 2; Job xxxviii. 4; Amos iv. 13; Rom. i. 25; Rev. iv. 11.

Then we speak of God as the Father. Jesus Himself taught us so to do, in the Lord's prayer. God is the Father of us all, 2 Thess. ii. 16. But we here mean God as the Father of the Lord Jesus—as He Himself used to call Him; see Matt. vii. 21; xv. 13. Christ is called his Son, by the voice from heaven, Matt. iii. 17.

Then we call God, Almighty; a title He takes to Himself, as in Gen. xvii. 1. Almighty means, able to do all things; and this truth is fully borne out by Daniel iv. 35; Job ix. 12. You look then at the *works* of God, and you read the *Word* of God, and from both you learn to say, "I believe in God," &c.

II. Next we go on to profess what we believe about Christ. You will have noticed people in Church bow when they mention the name of Christ here. This is not because more honour is to be paid to Him than to the Father and the Spirit, nor because we are ordered to do so in the Bible to Him, *more than to Them*. It is a custom in our Church, one of her canons or rules, and a mark of reverence, in accordance with St. Paul's words (Phil. ii. 10).

Now where do we learn all these things which we believe about Christ? In the four Gospels, and also in other parts of the Bible. It is then because we believe the Bible to be true, that we believe all these things. You will easily remember the history of his life and death, and how a great deal is summed up in these few words.

In what way is Christ the only Son of God, when Christians also are called his sons, as in John i. 12? Christ always was his own Son; whereas we are his *adopted* sons, Gal. iv. 6.

Christ is our Lord (*i.e.*, Master or Ruler); see what he says of Himself, Matt. xxviii. 18; and what St Paul says of Him, Phil. ii. 9—11. Perhaps you will say —all people do not believe in Him—all people do not serve Him. This is too true; but we pray, "Thy kingdom come;" and we believe God's own promise, which St. John in the Revelation foresaw as if already fulfilled, when he heard the song, Rev. xi. 15.

One thing only in this part of the Creed belongs to the future—"I believe that He shall thence (*i.e.*, from the right hand of God) He shall come to judge the quick (= living) and the dead." We believe this because He has said so Himself Matt. xxv. 31, 32. If we really believe this, how earnestly we ought to prepare for that day. No man knows when it will come, Matt. xxiv. 36. It may be to-day. Are you ready for it? Think of this when next you stand up to say—I believe in Jesus Christ.

III. Next we speak of our believing in the Holy Ghost; of whom we have

already spoken in the Te Deum, as the Comforter. In this Creed we only say that we believe in Him, and that is all. But even that implies a great deal. Let us see.

"I believe in the Holy Ghost." I believe that there is a Divine Person called the Holy Ghost, *i.e.*, the Holy Spirit. *Why* do I believe this? The very first chapter of Genesis tells us that the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters —thus helping to give them life. See also Job's words, xxxiii. 4. In Isaiah, and other prophets, God promises to pour out his Spirit, and thus to give spiritual life. See Is. xliv. 3; Joel ii. 29. In Luke xi. 13, and John xiv. 16, 17, xv. 7—11, our Saviour speaks of the Holy Spirit, as a precious gift of God to man. In Acts ii. we read of the Spirit being poured out on the Day of Pentecost, enabling the disciples to speak all languages.

When, then, we say we believe in God the Holy Ghost, we believe that He is —that He is God—that He will dwell in the hearts of the people of God—and that, dwelling there, He will work the work of grace in them.

What is the work of the Holy Spirit?

He gives us that new heart without which we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, as Christ taught Nicodemus. When he does this for us, we are said to be born of the Spirit, as in John iii. 5. He sanctifies us, *i.e.* makes us holy. So 2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 2. He teaches us. So Nehem, ix. 20; John xiv. 26; xvi. 13. He comforts us, as Christ called Him the Comforter, John xv. 26; Acts ix. 31; especially by enabling us to believe that we are God's children, Rom. viii. 15, 16. He leads us—that is, he shews us the path we ought to walk in, and helps us to walk there, Rom. viii, 14. He helps us to resist temptation, Rom. viii. 13; Eph. iii. 16. He makes intercession for us, and helps us to pray, Rom. viii. 26. He will give life to our dead bodies, at the last day Rom. viii. 11. He works *every* good work in the Christian, Gal. v. 22, 23; Ephes. v. 9.

And now, only one word more, and it is a solemn one. We may believe that the Holy Spirit can do all this; but the question is—Is He doing these things for us? for you, for me, for each one? How can we tell? He cannot be seen, but his work can be seen; as the wind which you hear and feel, but cannot see. If he dwells in us, the effect will be seen in our daily life. If He does not dwell in us, remember the awful words in Rom. viii. 9.

LESSON XXI.

THE APOSTLE'S CREED, *continued.*

"I BELIEVE . . . in the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of Saints."

These two articles of the Creed are closely connected together; that is, they have much to do with one another; but one will be enough for our lesson to-day, The Church is composed or made up of saints. But let us first see what is meant by the Church.

In one sense of the word the Church stands yonder, with its spire or tower, its aisles, windows, doors, porch, bells, &c.; and I should be sorry if any of you could say that you do not love the building where you have been taught to join in public worship. And that feeling would make us careful, so far as depends on us, to avoid all noise and all dirt, and keep the house of God as we like to keep our own—neat and clean. You may say that this is not religion, and that dirty

shoes spoil no prayers. But little things are often signs of great things, and a little carelessness often shows a great want of respect. Remember how David spoke of the temple,—"How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts!"

But there may be a Church without a building. Many and many a time the true servants of God have been persecuted and driven out, so that they have had to worship God on the mountain side, or in rocky caves. It was so with the Waldenses in Piedmont, and the Covenanters in Scotland, and Protestants in many Popish countries. And, besides, if I could now carry you away to missionary stations in Africa, India, Western America, or even China, you would find many a missionary preaching the Gospel in the open air, to those whom God has made into a little Church. For what does the word itself signify? It means chosen out, or called out; and that is just what Jesus said of his disciples, "I have chosen you out of the world," John xv. 19; and St. Peter says, 1 Pet. ii. 9, "God has called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." And when God thus chooses us, what does He make us, or what does He call us to? See Rom. i. 7; 1 Thes. iv. 7.

People thus chosen and called by God are called the Church of God. Acts ii. 47; viii. 1; xii. 5; xx. 28. Paul persecuted the Christians, and he says of it afterwards that he persecuted the Church, 1 Cor. xv. 9; and though he speaks only of Christians in Judea, the text already referred to, Acts xx. 28, shows that all whom Christ hath died for, and purchased with his blood, are called the Church.

But you will also find that whilst all true Christians in all countries make up the one Church, the Christians living in each country are called the Church "in" or "of" that country, or even city. See 1 Cor. xvi. 19; 2 Cor. viii. 1; Gal. i. 22; Rev. ii. 1, 8, 12, 18; iii. 1, 7, 14.

So now we talk of the Church of England, of Ireland, of Scotland: but all true Churches now, as then, form one Church.

What do we call this Church? Holy and Catholic.

How comes it to be holy? I need only remind you of the answer in the Catechism, that "the Holy Ghost sanctifieth (or makes holy) all the elect (or chosen) people of God." Not that they are at once made perfectly holy, but, from day to day, God carries on that work; and one day it will be finished, and God's Church in Heaven will have no spot or blemish, as St. Paul tells us in Ephes. v. 27.

But are all who call themselves members of the Church really such, and holy people? No, it is too easy to profess to be what we are not.

God called Israel a holy nation, although many of the people were anything but holy. And so He has now a visible Church composed of all who call themselves his, whilst, in this visible Church, there is the true Church, consisting of those who are really and truly his people. Read Rom. ix. 6. to show that it was so with the Israelites. God knows now who are really his, 2 Tim. ii. 19.

It is a solemn question for you and for me, whether we, who belong outwardly to the Church of God, do also belong to it truly and savingly.

But what is meant by the *Catholic* Church?

You must not think it means the Roman Catholic Church. The word Catholic means universal, and the Romanists would have the name confined to their Church, because they say that all people owe obedience to it. This, we, who are Protestants, deny; and we say that the people of God, in each country, form the Church of God in that country, and are not under subjection to the Pope. But then, we believe, as we say in the Creed, that there is one universal Church, of which the

Churches in different countries are parts, equal to each other in power, though unequal in numbers, and differing in many minor things.

We will conclude with one or two texts which speak of this universal Church: read Matt. xvi. 18; Acts xx. 28; Ephes. i. 22; iii. 10; v. 24, 25, 27–29; Col. i. 18; Heb. xii. 23.

LESSON XXII.

The Apostles' Creed, *continued*.

Our next lesson is about the "Communion of Saints." Who the saints are we have already seen. You and I ought to be, and may be amongst God's saints or holy people. And if we are so, our Saviour's words in Matt. xii. 35, will be true of us; we shall love to talk together of Christ and his death—of God and his forgiving love—of the Spirit and his patience with us—of our hopes, and of our enjoyments: we shall be glad to help one another—to warn one another—to comfort one another—to pray for one another; and all this is called the Communion, or fellowship of saints. If there were as much of this as there ought to be among Christians, all selfishness and unkindness would cease; and a happy day it will be for us when we reach that world where there shall be no such sins.

Try and pray to feel in your hearts that love to all Christian people which is meant by the Communion of saints. There are texts which show that something of it may be seen even in this world. Let us read one instance in the history of St. Paul, that man with a warm loving heart. Turn to Acts xxi. You see here how St. Paul and the Ephesian Christians loved one another; they honoured and respected him, and he felt a deep interest in their spiritual welfare; and thus there was close friendship and communion between them.

Then we will turn to some other passages. There is the walk of the two disciples to Emmaus, Luke xxiv., they talked together of Christ; there is the united prayer and thanksgiving recorded in Acts iv., when the disciples had heard from Peter and John the threatenings of the Jewish council; and many similar instances throughout the Acts, which show the unitedness of the early Christians.

That union and fellowship, at first, even extended to their money, which was made into a common stock; read Acts iv. 32–37; ii. 44. We are not told that this should be always so; but remember one text, at least, about the feeling which those who are well off should have towards the poor, it is 1 John iii. 17.

But there is another meaning of the Communion of saints. They not only have fellowship one with another (as St. John says in 1 John i. 7), but they have the great and precious privilege of having "fellowship" with God Himself; a word of condescension on his part which we should not dare to use, but that the Bible itself teaches us to do so.

How can it be that such poor weak sinful creatures as we are can be so honoured? It is all of God's free undeserved mercy. He calls us, chooses us, forgives us, cleanses us, gives us his Holy Spirit to sanctify us, clothes us in the robes of Christ's righteousness, and thus raises us to fellowship with Himself.

Read 1 John i. 3, where we are told that Christians have fellowship both with the Father and with Christ; and 2 Cor. xiii. 14, where St. Paul speaks of the communion, or fellowship of the Holy Ghost. Remember, too, our Saviour's gra-

cious words, where He speaks of coming into a man's heart to dwell there, John xiv. 23, and also 1 Cor. iii. 16; 1 John iv. 12, 15, 16.

And so the Sacrament of the Lord's supper, of which I hope you will all ere long partake, is called by us the communion, as St. Paul calls it in 1 Cor. x. 16. Christians join in it to commemorate the death of Christ, and He Himself is present with them to bless them, according to his own gracious promise, Matt. xviii. 20.

LESSON XXIII.

The Apostles' Creed, *continued.*

Next we come to these words "I believe in.....the forgiveness of sins."

We have gone through most of the Articles of the Creed, but not one of more consequence to us than this. We are all sinners, as you know *you* are, if you only look into your own hearts; and so the Bible tells us, 1 Kings viii. 46.

Again; the Bible tells us that God hates sin, Prov. xv. 9; Jer. xliv. 4; Zech. viii. 17. And if God hates sin, will He leave it unpunished? Here again the Bible leaves us in no doubt; read Ex. xxxii. 33; Ezek. xviii. 4; Rom. vi. 23. And what sort of death is meant here? That we learn in Ps. ix. 17, and Rev. xx. 14.

What good, then, to us are all those glorious things we have talked about, if we have no hope, and no forgiveness? If a beggar stands at a palace door, *shut out*—if a starving man stands at the window of a baker's shop, *shut out*—if a drowning man sees a beautiful shore, which *he never can reach*—what good are all those things to these poor wretches? But only tell the beggar that the king has taken him into his services—only tell the starving man that he may have what he want without stint, and without money—only throw the drowning man a rope or a plank, that would save him—*then* you have done something worth all besides.

So with us—we hear of God's power, glory, greatness, goodness; we hear of Christ's love, of the Holy Spirit, of heaven; but we want most to know if we can have any share in these. Are we cast off for ever? No! we believe in the forgiveness of sin, and we do so for the best of all reasons—the Bible, the Word of God, gives us the precious news! and we will to-day look at some of the texts which assure us that God is ready to forgive.

First, we will take God's own words; then, what those who have been forgiven have said of it. As soon as sin was committed, there was a gracious promise given, which implied forgiveness of sin. That the seed, or child, of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, (that is, conquer Satan), implied that Satan's work of ruining man by sin should be undone again, and man forgiven.

Then let us remember God's provision under the Jewish law for the pardon of sin, and the cleansing of the sinner by the typical sacrifices.

Next we come to the plain and direct promises, of which we need only read a few, Ex. xxxiv. 7; 2 Chron. vii. 14; Is. xliii. 25; xliv. 22; Jer. xxxi. 34; xxxiii. 8. 1 20; Luke vi. 37.

How full is the forgiveness here described, and how free and undeserved! Well may St. Paul say of the love of God, that it passeth knowledge.

And now have any of the good men spoken of in the Bible felt this forgiveness?

Yes, many; and how have they rejoiced to do so! We will read some of the texts in which different men have so spoken, Neh. ix. 17; Ps. lvi. 13; Micah vii. 18; Rom. viii. 1; Eph. ii. 1, 5; 1 John i. 7, 9; Rev. v. 9; vii. 14. We may well believe, then, in the forgiveness of sins, for we have God's own Word to trust to; and many a happy pardoned sinner, in times past, has left us his record of his own happiness.

Only let me, lastly, remind you, that there is but *one* way of forgiveness—the blood of Christ alone can redeem us, Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14; Heb. ix. 12. Is that forgiveness yours? Have you ever sought it, as David did in the 51st Psalm?

LESSON XXIV.

THE APOSTLES' CREED, *concluded.*

"I BELIEVE in . . . . the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting."

Fancy a man living in the Torrid Zone, on the sandy deserts of Africa, or the vast meadows of South America—what could that man know of snow and ice? There are countless wonders in the world which three-fourths of the human race know nothing of; and you and I, as we read the accounts of travellers, often find a difficulty in really imagining what they try to describe. Yet, if the writer have a character for speaking the truth, we do not hesitate to believe many things which are quite strange to us.

Nothing can be more strange to us than the resurrection, or rising again, of a dead body. We see the leafless trees of winter put out buds again in spring, and many plants die down to their roots to shoot up again; but though these are emblems of the resurrection, they are not to be compared for a moment to the return of life to a dead body. Most of you have seen a dead body—remember it! how cold, how stiff, how unmoveable. Soon the grave covers it, and you could not bear to see what it had become in a few weeks. Years roll by, and all that is left is a few mouldering bones! The eye, the tongue, the brains, the flesh, all are gone. You would say gone for ever, but the Bible stops you—and just because the Bible tells you that that dead body will live again you believe it.

You may well do so, for He who inspired his servants to write that book, has placed there many a bright promise of a resurrection, and He can make the dry bones live.

When we walk through a churchyard, or sail over the deep sea, it is wonderful to think that out of the earth, and out of the water, countless human beings will be called back to life. You should try to think more of this.

But let us see what the Bible says of the resurrection of the dead. And first in the old Testament:—

St. Paul says, in Heb. xi. 35 (where he is speaking of Old Testament saints), that "women received their dead raised to life again." Of this there are two particular instances recorded, which we will turn to, 1 Kings xvii. 17—23; 2 Kings iv. 32—36. Besides this, there is a remarkable resurrection related in 2 Kings xiii. 20, 21.

These are but few, but even one would be enough to show that such a thing could be. And then let us read the vision of Ezekiel, when he prophesied to a large number of dead bodies, and saw them all return to life, Ezek. xxxvii. 1—10.

This, you see, was only a vision; but I wish to show you that the ancient people of God were taught the doctrine of the resurrection, both by vision and miracle, and there are passages which show that they received it. We will read two or three. Read Job xix. 25, 26; Ps. xvi. 10; xlix. 15; Isaiah xxv. 8; xxvi. 19. You will notice how Job actually speaks of his dead body being consumed by the worms, and yet that in his flesh he would see God. Could *you* speak more clearly about the resurrection of the body?

When we turn to the New Testament, we naturally find much more said about it, because the New Testament contains much more of doctrinal teaching, and because our blessed Saviour came to bring life and immortality to light through the Gospel—that is, He came to *give* eternal life, and to show it and *offer* it to all, more clearly and plainly than ever had been done before.

Our Saviour several times raised dead bodies to life again, as He said of Himself to the messengers of John the Baptist, Matt. xi. 5. You will remember the three chief instances—Jairus' daughter, the Widow's son, and Lazarus.

Did the Jews, then, generally believe the doctrine? There was a sect that did not, called Sadducees. Read Luke xx. 27; Acts xxiii. 6—8; but that very mention of them shows that the people in general did believe in it. See what St. Paul says of his nation in Acts. xxiv. 15.

And now let us turn to a few of the texts which describe the resurrection. Read Luke xiv. 14; John v. 29; xi. 24; Romans vi. 5; and, above all, the beautiful description in 1 Cor. xv. 50—55.

You see the *time* is not certainly known, as our Saviour tells us Matt. xxiv. 36; but *all* will rise, all will be judged.

And then the life everlasting; that is not the living for ever where the fire is never quenched; that is called death; but living with God in heaven.

You believe in that; you believe that some will enjoy it; will you yourselves be partakers of it? Who will? You know the answer—Those whom Christ has redeemed, and who have come to Him for salvation.

LESSON XXV.

SENTENCES FOLLOWING THE CREED.

Our last lesson finished what we had to say about the Creed.

Now you must look again to your prayer books and you will see a direction that all the congregation are to kneel down devoutly for prayer. Some persons never kneel at all, and others do it carelessly. Let us remember that it becomes us to be very reverent before the great and glorious God.

Now look at the two beautiful sentences that follow. The minister, "with a loud voice," so that all may hear and attend, says to the people, "The Lord be with you," and they reply, "And with thy spirit."

Remember that this is an introduction to the prayers that follow, and thus we are especially reminded that we cannot—whether minister or layman—pray right and acceptably, unless the Lord be with us, with our spirit. This is the reason of the supplication here put in our mouths—and it is founded on Scripture—read Rom. viii. 26. Do you ever think of this, and ask God to help you to pray?

Next comes a threefold prayer for mercy, addressed, in turn, to each person of

the Holy Trinity. You will remember what I said of this before. And we have also gone through the Lord's Prayer, which minister and people next repeat together. It seems to be used here again as a kind of model or pattern for all the prayers which are to follow. For you will see in Matt. vi. 9, that our Saviour intends us both to use the words themselves, and also to make them a pattern by which to form other prayers. If you look at the prayers as they follow, you will find that the Lord's Prayer contains the sum and substance of all things that a Christian need ask for, only God encourages us to enlarge our prayers, and also to speak to Him of particular private things which could not be all specified in a prayer intended for general use.

Just take one instance in the versicles that follow. We pray that God would save the Queen, and properly so; yet we *cannot* ask for her any greater blessings than are contained in the Lord's Prayer; nor could we say that she was not already included amongst those who call God "Our Father."

Let us now look at these twelve versicles, which the clergymen and the people repeat alternately.

One is a special prayer for the Queen. We have Bible authority for this, as we find in 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. No earthly pomp, no wealth, no power, no wisdom can, in the full sense of the word, *save* the Queen. She needs the same Saviour that we do; and we have great cause to rejoice in the hope that our gracious Sovereign knows this, and is truly seeking that Saviour; for a better Queen never wore a crown. Let us pray that she may wear a heavenly crown with all God's people, 2 Tim. iv. 8. The peculiar duties, and dangers, and wants of monarchs are such that they especially need the prayers of the people over whom they rule.

There is a particular prayer here for ministers; and surely they well deserve our prayers. We owe them love, respect, attention, and help—when we can render any; see what the Bible says of this in Heb. xiii. 7, 17; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. Here we pray that God would endue them with righteousness: *i. e.*, amongst other blessings, that He would give them grace to live a righteous and godly life; such a life as will give power to their preaching.

Then as to ourselves we pray,

1st, for mercy.
2nd, for salvation.
3rd, for answers to our prayers.
4th, for joy.
5th, for God's blessing.
6th, for peace.
7th, for a clean heart.
8th, that God's Holy Spirit may never be taken away from us.

And I have just a few questions to ask you about these.

Why do we ask for mercy, and for salvation? Because we are sinful, and because we are in danger.

Why do we ask, like David in Ps. li., for a new or clean heart? Because our hearts are naturally unclean and sinful, as that same Psalm teaches us.

Why do we ask for peace and joy? It is equal to acknowledging that those things are God's gifts, and so they really are. Read Is. lvii. 19—21, and Rom. xiv. 17; and we also include national peace, which is a great blessing, and for which we look only to God, not trusting to any other "that fighteth for us."

Why do we plead that the Holy Spirit may not be taken from us? Because we often grieve Him by our sinfulness and weakness, and if He were provoked to leave us, we should be lost indeed. Remember St. Paul's warning, Ephes. iv. 30.

We ask God to hear our prayers—has He given us any promise that He will do so? Yes, many. We will read two or three, Is. lxv. 24; Matt. vii. 7, 8; John xvi. 23, 24, 26, 27.

LESSON XXVI.

The Collects.

If you look at the Rubric, you will find that the next prayer to be used is what is called the Collect for the day; which means that for each of the Sundays in the year there is a particular Collect, or short prayer. The meaning of the word is disputed, some think it is that out of the portions of Scripture which follow, certain truths are collected to be turned into prayers. By referring to your Prayer Books you will see that each Sunday has its own name, such as Advent Sunday, First Sunday after Advent, &c., and that each has its own Collect, and two portions of Scripture, one generally from the Epistles, and therefore called the Epistle for the day; and one from the Gospels, therefore called the Gospel for the day. These, with the particular lessons appointed, were once all connected by having some similar truths in each; but though many are so still, the connection in others has been lost, by reason of some of the Collects being altered.

These Collects are universally admired as containing most important prayers in few words; yet whilst full of meaning, so clear and so simple as to be easily understood. Some of them have been used by the people of God for hundreds of years, even since three or four hundred years after Christ.

I wish you to know them thoroughly, for they will often help you to pray, and they are themselves excellent prayers to be learned and *remembered*. Of course I cannot go through them one by one—that forms part of your regular Sunday instruction. I will now only refer to a few, for the purpose of pointing out to you the kind of petitions you are thus taught to use. Let us look at them in these different points of view.

I. What do they say of God? his character and attributes?

II. What do they say as to man? his unworthiness, weakness, and need of a Saviour?

III. What do they say of that Saviour?

IV. What do they say of the Holy Spirit?

V. What blessings do they seek for the present life?

VI. What blessings do they seek for the world to come?

Try and follow me in your Prayer Books as I refer to each Collect.

1st. What do we say of God? I will refer to the Collects, and you shall turn to each and give the answer. Of course I will not refer to those that use the same words again. Look then at Advent Sunday, First Sunday after Advent, St. John's Day, Second Sunday after Epiphany, Ash Wednesday (towards the end of the Collect), Sunday after Ascension Day, Fourth Sunday after Trinity (end of the Collect), Seventh Sunday after Trinity.

These are only the titles and attributes of God; but other Collects speak of the great things God has done or is doing for us. Refer for such to the Second Sunday in Advent, Christmas Day, Epiphany, Second Sunday after Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, First Sunday in Lent (addressed to our Saviour), Sunday before Easter, Good Friday (third Collect), Easter Day, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays after Easter, Sunday after Ascension, Whit Sunday, First, Second, Fourth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Twelfth, Thirteenth, Sundays after Trinity.

2nd. What do the Collects say about mankind? For this refer to the Fourth

Sunday in Advent, Third and Fourth Sundays in Epiphany, Septuagesima Sunday, Sexagesima Sunday, Second and Fourth Sundays in Lent, Ninth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Nineteenth, Sundays after Trinity.

3rd. What do they say about Christ, our Saviour? Refer to the First and Third Sundays in Advent, Christmas Day, Sunday after Christmas Day, Circumcision, Epiphany, Sixth Sunday after Epiphany, Septuagesima Sunday, First Sunday in Lent, Sunday before Easter, Good Friday, Easter Even, Easter Day, First and Second Sundays after Easter, Ascension Day, Sunday after Ascension.

4th. What do they say of the Holy Spirit and his work? Refer to the First and Second Sundays in Advent (the latter is entirely addressed to the Holy Spirit), Christmas Day, St. Stephen's Day, Quinquagesima Sunday, Sunday after Ascension day, Whit-Sunday, Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

5th. What present blessings do they teach us to ask for? Refer to some of the most striking: First, Second, Fourth, Sundays in Advent, Christmas Day, St. Stephen's Day, Innocent's Day, Circumcision, First, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sundays after Epiphany, Quinquagesima Sunday, Ash Wednesday, Second Sunday in Lent, Easter Day, First, Second, Fourth, Sundays after Easter Day, Whit-Sunday, Tenth, Twelfth, Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-first, Sundays after Trinity.

6th. What blessings in the world to come do they teach us to ask for? Refer to the First and Third Sundays in Advent, Epiphany, Second and Sixth Sundays after Epiphany, Sunday before Easter, Sunday after Ascension Day, Fourth and Thirteenth Sundays after Trinity.

Thus you see how fully these Collects meet our wants, our dangers, our duties. Therefore you should *prize* or *value* them; and you should often *use* them, not at church alone, but by yourselves.

Note.—The object of this lesson is to show the fulness of the Collects, not to shew that the statements made in them are supported by Scripture. The latter would lead to a lesson on each Collect; whilst our design is rather to show the young what a varied, full, and simple collection of prayers they here possess. The lesson would form material for more than one occasion.

LESSON XXVII.

The Collects for Peace and Grace at Morning Prayer.

After the Collect for the day, which is changed almost every Sunday, come two Collects which are never changed, and you will see that they are called Collects for Peace and Grace. Let us look at them.

1st. For Peace. We say that God is the author of peace, meaning that God gives peace—peace between Him and us by the blood of Christ, and peace between man and man by Christian love. Read Acts, x. 36; Mark, ix. 50.

Then we call Him the lover of concord, which means agreement. This is as much as to say that He loves to see men agree together.

Next, "in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life." This seems a difficult sentence, but there is a text in the Bible of exactly the same meaning, in other words, it is John xvii. 3. It is as much as to say, that if we know God, in that sense, our eternal life stands sure, or consists in knowing Him.

Then we say, that it is freedom to serve God. Sin is slavery, and hardened sinners are Satan's slaves. God can break their chains if they cry to Him, and then they are made free. See what Jesus said to the Jews about this in John viii. 31, 32, 36, whilst He speaks of sin as bondage in verse 34 of that chapter, as St. Paul does in Rom. vi. 16, 20; and St. Peter in his second Epistle, chap. ii. 19; see also Matt. xi. 28—30. We shall find it easy to serve God just in proportion as we lean on Him, and pray to Him for his strength; whilst, if we trust in our own, and are backward in prayer, we shall find it impossible to serve Him aright.

The rest of the Collect is a prayer for safety, and may be taken both as regards spiritual dangers and temporal ones. We may not happen to have any earthly enemies to assault us, but many people have. But as regards spiritual dangers, it is a prayer we ought all to use, for against such enemies we cannot stand in our own strength. God alone can keep us. In Him we may safely trust, as did David, Ps. xxvii. 1—5; read also Rom. viii. 31.

The next Collect is for Grace. Grace means literally favour; and we will see what sort of favours we here ask of God.

See the titles we give Him, expressive of his power, his eternity, his fatherly love. Then see the acknowledgment that it is his hand that has preserved us so far. By day, and by night, we owe every breath we draw, and every moment of life to God. Read Ps. iii. 5; iv. 8; cxxvii. 2; Acts xvii. 28.

Acknowledging, then, this favour, we ask for two others—the continuance of God's protection for our bodies, to keep us from running into any kind of danger; and his protection for our souls, that we fall into no sin, but may do what is pleasing to Him. This will be the case if, as we also pray, all our doings are ordered by his governance, *i. e.*, if He so governs us in all our conduct that we do his will, not following, as we too often do, "the devices and desires of our own hearts."

Would you know how safe God's children are? Let us, in conclusion, read part of Ps. xci., and may we all be numbered amongst those who are so cared for; —"they shall never perish."

NOTES OF LESSONS ON THE LIFE OF ST. PETER.

Lesson VII.

A CHARACTER is often shown in a strong light by very simple incidents. Such an one was the visit of Peter and John to the Sepulchre. Aroused by the news that the Lord's body was not to be found in the tomb, they ran to see, John xx. 1—8; John a young man outran Peter; but, however excited, he hesitated to enter the sacred sepulchre. Peter, as earnest, and more ardent, *goes in*. This is followed by another natural trait. John follows, where he would not lead.

We should notice here the evidence that Peter was *not hopeless* of pardon. Deeply had he grieved, Luke xxii. 62, but the message by

the angels (Mark xvi. 7) had been a ray of hope; and he also had evidently neither left the other apostles, nor been disowned by them. Such was the spirit of the precept afterwards given by St. Paul: Gal. vi. 1.

And he showed his *deep interest* in all that concerned his Master. What place so dear to him as that tomb? What question so important as what had become of his Lord? "Whom have I in heaven but Thee?"

Note also the tender mercy that kept him thus from despair and apostacy. When we say, and truly too, that our feet slip, yet God's mercy holds us up.

Soon that forgiveness was sealed in a remarkable way: as related in John xxi.

We find the Apostles again at their ancient employment. Gifted as they now were, and waiting for further duties and graces, they rightly thought it no degradation to earn their daily bread. We are to work as well as pray for it: and religion hallows and dignifies the commonest drudgery, when done unto the Lord.

Also in their work we see Christian fellowship and communion, "We also go with thee."

Once again we find them toiling in vain: compare Luke v. 1—11. In all such trials God has purposes of mercy to his children—these are "blessings in disguise." Jesus was near; they knew Him not: (see John xx. 14)—He was the same, yet not the same,—Himself but glorified, though concealing most of his glory.

Why was the miracle repeated? The lessons of patience, dependence, faith and hope, taught at the commencement of the Lord's ministry seemed needed again—("precept upon precept,")—and especially as they now were to enter on their missionary labours *alone*. But now compare Peter's conduct on the two occasions. Once he cried "depart from me;" now he throws himself into the sea to meet Jesus. Why this? not from a duller sense of sin, but a fuller sense, of pardon, and a truer faith in Christ as a loving Redeemer.

Note our Lord's manner of dealing with Peter; and his design.

What did Peter need? He had deeply mourned, and he had been forgiven, but He who knows the heart saw fit to re-open the wound, though only to heal it the more perfectly.

We have then a three-fold question, a three-fold answer, a three-fold charge. Peter's grief was, probably, from the remembrance thus effected of the three-fold denial. But note how he had grown in grace. He makes no loud or vehement protestations as before, but can in sincerity stand the searching test of the Lord. "Thou knowest that I love thee." Can we conscientiously say as much?

Lesson VIII.

We come next to the remarkable commencement of Peter's missionary labours. He was to open both doors, to Jew and to Gentile, and on this day of Pentecost he fulfilled the first duty, as he afterwards did the second, Acts x.

The event itself, for which the Apostles were waiting, Luke xxiv. 49, in prayer, Acts i. 14, though only partly conscious of the full meaning of the promise.

What did they already know of the power of the Spirit? See passages scattered through John xiv., xv., xvi., and in Isaiah and Joel. But in God's gift, the reality far exceeds expectation, Isaiah lxiv. 4. This all His children will one day know.

The sound and the appearance were both emblematic. The first, of the *unseen* but *felt* influence, John iii. The second of the purifying and quickening grace, "life and light, and fire of love." How different a cold heart from a warm one—a hard one from a melted and softened one—a natural heart from one refined, unalloyed, and pure!

What was the purport of the miraculous gifts? To enable them to spread the Gospel with rapidity, and to add one more sign of the Divine power of its Author—of even more value therefore abroad than at home, 1 Cor. xiv., though here also most important at that particular time, when the feast had brought so many foreign Jews to Jerusalem.

But our lesson chiefly concerns Peter's conduct on this occasion.

He evidently took the lead amongst the Apostles. He aimed at three things. 1st. To identify this miracle with Joel's prophecy, Acts. ii. 14—21. 2nd. To prove that Christ was the Messiah foretold by David, Acts ii. 22—36. 3rd. To produce conviction of sin in the hearts of his hearers—holding forth also salvation through Christ, Acts. ii. 38—40. Thus he displayed boldness—knowledge of Divine truth, and devotedness to Christ, as his only and beloved Saviour. How he had altered since the day that he denied his Lord! This was indeed growing in grace.

J. G. J.

The Lecture.

AN ADDRESS

Delivered to the Members of the
CHURCH OF ENGLAND SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTITUTE,
On the occasion of the
NEW YEAR'S COMMUNION SERVICE FOR TEACHERS,
At St. Andrew's Church, Holborn, London, on January 2, 1862,
BY THE
REV. R. FREDERICK L. BLUNT,
Senior Curate of St. Luke's, Chelsea.

"When He putteth forth His own sheep He goeth before them." John x. 4.

WE are met together, my friends, under no ordinary circumstances - not as members of the same Sunday congregations; not as fellow parishioners; not merely as fellow churchmen or fellow Christians, but as fellow servants in one department of our common Master's household; as brethren ministering to one particular branch of the great Father's family. And also, we are met together at no ordinary season—New Year's thoughts are uppermost in our minds—New Year's welcomes are spoken to all we meet; our service, our communion to-night are, as it were, our New Year's welcome and New Year's blessing to one another. These New Year's thoughts however are mingled—hope and fear are vibrating. We hope this year will be better than the last—and yet will past experience justify the hope? Oh, does it not seem that the church bells of the New Year speak out best what it is we are feeling, for in them too there is a strange mingling of sadness and joy—of vague fears and throbbing hope—as they take us back into the past when we heard them long ago with all its mingled recollections, and carry us on into the future, when those bells shall still ring in other New Years over the city, when our voices are heard no more, and we have passed away. Now, brethren, it is to this hope within you that I would address myself, and see how it may be delivered from those doubts and fears which so nearly stifle it. I have no new theories or doctrines to give you, but, as God shall help me, I will try to say a few words simply and earnestly to your hearts, to cheer and help you in your special work as teachers, that so we may all, both preacher and congregation, be able to gather up our strength, fortify our courage, and stablish our hearts for the work before us, that so we may go forward in this New Year as those whom the good Shepherd putteth forth, as those who know they are His sheep, and that he is going before them—fresh, vigorous, hopeful in the New Year's gladness, like men who go out at early dawn to their day's labour with God's sun shining on their path, and the light of the life of God beaming in their eyes.

I speak to you then as Christian men and women engaged in the work of

Sunday School teaching, and ask you to-night to consider with me what that work really is when it is honestly and piously done.

My friends, the Sunday School teachers' work is a work *for God*: a work which He has called you to do *for* Him. Yes, I solemnly believe that God has called *you* to your work as Sunday School Teachers. I ask you whether you believe it. The call was not audible. He who called was not visible. The ear heard no voice. The eye did not behold a vision. But yet the call came. It was heard in the recesses of your heart when the first wish to teach arose within you, when you thought you would offer yourself, when you wished to do so; when you first went, on that Sunday which you well remember, and began your work: these thoughts, desires, visitations, were the voice of God within you, calling you perhaps out of a life of carelessness, thoughtless indifference, indolence, to arise and work for Him. Like Samuel you may not have known whence that voice came, but indeed it did proceed from above the mercy seat, it did arouse you, did reveal God's will to you, his will that you should work *for* Him by helping his little ones: it was indeed the Shepherd's voice, "calling his sheep by name," and leading them out in the right way; and that voice, thank God, you did obey; in that hour He was putting you forth, and Himself going before you.

But your work is not only a work *for* God, it is also a work *with* God. Yes, my friends, a work *with* God. "Ye are labourers together with God." Do you say this is more awful than working *for* God? You are right, it *is* more awful, for the idea is not that we are *servants*, but that we are *fellow-helpers*. And yet if you think seriously of your work, you will see that though this thought is awful, it is not the less true. Day by day, as we realise the sin and misery, and suffering and death, in this world of ours, the prayer rises, "Our Father, Thy kingdom come; Thy kingdom, where these are unknown, come amongst us, come within us," and day by day the answer of mercy descends into the world. Our Father in heaven answers it in part by the very means of us who offer it. He puts into our hearts the will, He strengthens us with the power, to advance the coming of his kingdom by our lives and our teaching. True—the work is His. Every advance that kingdom makes in a nation, a city, a parish, is His doing. But He condescends to bring it about through the means of His servants. *He* works *with* them. They work *with* Him. Think of that, my dear friends, when next you gather your classes around you. Think that the words you speak, the lessons you give, you are speaking and giving not only *for* God but *with* God. It seems hard to realise, so tremendous is the fact, but we bring it home to our hearts by the simple words of the text, "He putteth forth his own sheep, He goeth before them." Think then that that Divine human Teacher who once taught in the synagogue at Nazareth, who spoke loving words of truth to Mary as she listened at his feet, sits there beside you. Think that every word of truth, love, kindness, you speak to your children, He is speaking through you; that if they receive it, and take it to their hearts, it is His Spirit which has carried it there. Repeat to yourself the words "He goeth before me"—and you will in that lesson have entered into the meaning of your work, being not merely a work *for* God but a work *with* God. You will realise that you are a labourer together with Him, and that therefore "neither is He that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God" that is giving and will give the increase.

But, again. Your work is not only to be a work *for* God and a work *with*

God, but it is to be a work *in* God. This is the highest aspect of our work, the point at which we must be always aiming, however seldom we may reach it.

And here, my friends, I feel that all words fail me to express what is meant by a work *in* God, such as St. Paul expresses by the words, "Knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." Work *in* God. Oh we cannot know what that means until we know what "*life* in God" means. It is only He who *lives* in God that can *work* in God. But what is that life in God—that life hid with Christ in God? I conceive it is this—to have one's whole being rooted and grounded in Christ—to be so completely one with Him in heart and affections and will, that His love breathes in our spirit, and His mind is the spring of our thoughts, while deep down in our being—whence is ever rising the fountain of our secret impulses, imaginations, longings—the source of that fountain is His Spirit, who unconsciously to us, dwells there, breathes life, and imparts and sustains the well of living water. Then is our life with Christ—a hidden life in God; it is not that this particular act is holy—this part of our character and conversation upright and loving,—but it is that the whole man, his whole being, with all its infinite complexities of mind, soul, affections, spirit, will, is joined to Christ, is dwelling in Christ—the man knows God in Christ—that knowledge is to him eternal life. This is, as far as I can understand it, a life in God; and only he who so lives in God can be said to work in God: it seems to be the last step of the ladder, whose top reaches into heaven, a step to which few of us perhaps will ever mount, while yet the burden of the flesh drags us down towards earth and things seen and temporal; and yet I do believe, my friends, that there are times when the clouds which hang along the ladder's top are rolled away, and we for a short hour plant our feet within the highest regions of faith and love—times when our hearts seem to rest in true harmony upon the heart of Jesus our Lord, and some pulses of this life in God beat within us. It may be those times have been hours of real prayer, when we have passed out of ourselves, out of the petty thoughts and desires of a selfish will, and entered into communion with God; when in no rapture of ecstacy, but in sober devotion we lost ourselves in His love and holiness, and quenched all our desires in that one desire for the coming of his kingdom; or it may be those times were when we forgot ourselves in an act of love, sympathy, self-denial, by suffering with another, by mourning with the desolate and heart-broken; by nursing and watching by the sick; by interceding for the dying, the hardened, the lost; or it may be they were times when we were swept out of ourselves in the earnestness of entreaty or exhortation—when our very hearts spoke to the hearts of the children before us, and we felt we could pour out ourselves for them, could give up all we had and all we hoped for, if only we could bring them nearer to their Father, and gather them into His kingdom and glory. Oh at such times our work was a work *in* God—*then*, though it was as a flash of light, yet the glory of the life of God did strike across us, we did indeed taste the true blessedness of *His* life Who gave Himself for us, Who declared what man's true life and man's true work, both here and hereafter, must ever be—a life lost for self and found in God—a work *for* God, a work *with* God, and a work *in* God.

I have been speaking to you, my dear friends, of your work as Sunday School Teachers in three aspects, as a work *for* God, a work *with* God, and a work *in* God; but I cannot conceal from myself that there must be many of you who are confessing "That is not a picture of *my* work; it does not truly describe

what *I* do; it is not a hopeful or encouraging prospect with which to begin a New Year, to see before me a standard which I do not at present see much probability of reaching." Perhaps not one of us is altogether free from this feeling, and indeed ought not to be free from it, if we are humble and honest. Bear with me then a few minutes while I endeavour simply to trace the growth and spread of some of the discouragements and difficulties which give rise to these thoughts.

There is one difficulty which I would treat first, because it is perhaps first in importance and first in order of time. I can well imagine one of you reasoning in this way, "Am I called of God to this work? Can it be a work *for* Him, or a work *with* Him, or still more a work *in* Him, when I am conscious that I undertook it from no very high motive? I became a Sunday School teacher because my brother, sister, friend, taught in the school; because I was persuaded into it rather against my will; while secretly in my own heart I know there were other motives over and above these which had *some* influence with me, I dare not ask myself how much, of which no one knew anything; yet which now the subject is brought before me I remember well; and I honestly confess those motives were very unworthy."

While I can imagine another saying, "This was not the case with me; I think at first I was tolerably sincere, but now I have become rather weary of my Sunday work. I think I must soon give it up; it is no pleasure but a hard duty. However good my motives and intentions were for beginning it, my motives for continuing it are certainly far from being as good as they might be. It is little more than fear of reproach which keeps me now to my Sunday post." I cannot doubt but that amongst this large body of teachers there are some whose case I have described; and if so, let those of you, my friends, who feel that it is their case, be thankful if they have the grace of candour and humility to confess it to themselves and to God. To those then I would say, Do not be discouraged; do not persuade yourselves to give up the work. I allow (it would be false kindness not to allow) that your work is not the work it ought to be. I allow you have cause for anxiety; but will you give up your work because you cannot fulfil it as you would wish? Nay, rather, my brother, or sister, at least persevere in what you are doing all the more diligently, cling to what is yet left you only all the more tenaciously, because what you are doing is so trifling, what is now left to you has become so insignificant. Is it a duty and not a pleasure? Then at least as a duty perform it. Is it that your motive in coming to the Sunday School is to join a friend or companion? Still, unworthy though the motive be, yet at least do not give up the work, and wait till a better motive comes before you resume it; but rather work with the lower motive, and strive and pray that in the work you may develope motives higher and purer. O believe me, my friends, many a man has set about a work or a duty with very pitiful motives, but God has led him through the work of the hands to the love of the heart. Many a man, for instance, has visited the poor in their homes, or in workhouses, the sick in hospitals, the helpless in asylums, or the outcast in refuges, merely from a desire to increase his social knowledge, or indulge a vulgar curiosity; but in the work of visiting his spirit has been touched, and the true human heart within him has been softened by the love of Him who is every man's brother, until the mere social economist has passed into the generous and Christian philanthropist. And I doubt not, many a Sunday School Teacher has attended the Sunday School simply to gain esteem or enjoy a little excitement, or from some other un-

worthy motive, but has, nevertheless, so worked and so prayed that at length the base motive has been exchanged for a purer one, and the graceless duty for a heartfelt pleasure. For God works *in* us and *on* us in ten thousand ways; often it is even by discovering how base and false these hearts of ours are that He leads us to cultivate truth, honesty, and sincerity. True, you must have faith that you may work aright. Yes, but it is nevertheless true that you may even in your faithless work learn a truer faith. I would say to you, Love in order that you may work. Yes, but I would also say Work, in order that you may love. Stand not all the day idle until the love and faith and pure motives kindle within you the desire for work. But work and pray that you may love and believe, and you will find that in the midst of the work—it may be by its failures, or it may be by its successes,—God will lead you to a better spirit. Therefore, my Christian friends, be earnest, be prayerful, work earnestly and prayerfully, even if you cannot as yet work lovingly and faithfully; and He who goeth before you in all your ways, even when you forget Him and cannot think He is with you, will reward your honest efforts according to His own promise, "If any man *will* do," i. e. if any man *wishes* to do "His will he shall know of the doctrine."

Again. Another difficulty besets you—how terrible a one they only know who have felt it. You say, "I do not live up to what I teach; and it is hypocrisy to teach what I am not practising. I feel almost resolved to give up teaching until I have learnt more myself." I am sure, my dear friends, that there is so much reality in this difficulty, and that it is one so commonly felt by all of us, that I should shrink from dismissing it with the words, "Live better and you will not feel this." Such an answer seems to me to be a mocking one to address to any fellow sinner. I dare not say that any of you will ever be delivered from such a feeling of discouragement so long as you are in the body, for if your message is a revelation of God and of his perfection, and of how his children may attain to it, I cannot suppose that your life and conversation will ever fully correspond with such a revelation—I cannot suppose that you will ever be satisfied that your life is in true harmony with the life of God, for only the Son of God was the perfect revelation of the Father, He only is the express image of His person. Never then let your class suppose that you are presenting yourself as their pattern; no; not what *you* are, but what *Christ* is: let them feel that this is *your* aim, that you desire it to be *theirs*. Keep this steadily before you in all your teaching—the perfect pattern of the perfect Man. Take care that in all your example of what is true and noble for them to copy, you hold up steadily before them nothing less than the example of His most holy life. It is, I believe, this one thought which will save you from being too much depressed as well as from being too much exalted. It is true (yes, brethren, and you cannot think of it, or pray over it too earnestly), that you must endeavour to live as a pattern to your class,—that thought must make you circumspect, even in the least matters at school and at home, in hours of work and of recreation;—but at the same time beware lest you forget, or suffer your class to forget, that it is only in so far as you are following Christ, that they may follow you—only while you are remembering that you are His sheep, that He is going before you to lead and direct you, that they are to come after you.

Once again. You complain (which of us does not complain?) that you do no good, that you have taught for many years and you have seen no fruit of your labour. Perhaps this is partly true, because you often go to your

Sunday's work unprepared, without realising the presence or the love of God—without being filled with a real love for His little children—without having pondered over and prayed over the lesson you are about to give them—without having offered one petition for them, and only very feeble petitions for yourselves. When this has been the case with you, you need not wonder that your labour is in vain, for it is not a "labour in the Lord." But, besides such cases as these, I think we have to meet the despondency of teachers who, though faithful and prayerful, yet complain that after many years of diligent teaching no fruits appear; to such I would offer one or two considerations, which I honestly believe they sometimes overlook. I would say then, Take care that you do not expect too much as the ordinary fruit of your work. You are not to expect that the one or two hours' teaching a week which your children receive will correct and destroy all the influence (sometimes very evil, in most cases very unsatisfactory) of the rest of the week. You are not to expect that the children are likely to become, at all events in the few years during which they come under your instruction, patterns of Christian children—of that kind of which you read in tracts and religious biographies; you may occasionally meet with such cases, but beware of expecting them as the ordinary results of Sunday School teaching; and, above all, beware of forcing characters of this kind by working on your childrens' susceptibility of religious excitement. No; you must be content to do what you can with all your might, prayerfully, humbly, lovingly, and patiently leave the issue in God's hands. The work is not yours, but His. He takes a far deeper interest in it than you ever can. Each child's welfare is infinitely dearer to its Father in heaven than to its teacher on earth. For the fruits of your labour He waits with a watchful care beside which your most earnest longing seems almost like faithless despondency. It may be that the first fruits of a harvest richer than you can conceive, others shall see and rejoice in. It may be that the clergyman who visits the dying bed of one of your children in years to come, shall thank God for that memory of the happier days of the old man's childhood which still survives, for that little germ of something better lying beneath the crust and hardness of long years of carelessness. Yes, though the teacher may be far away, laid by in old age or sickness from his work of love, or long since passed away to a better work above; yet the seed which fell into the ground and died, is quickened again, and shall bring forth fruit unto life eternal. Therefore, brethren, "learn to labour and to wait;" for *that* is indeed the highest labour which neither seeks nor asks reward, for *that* is indeed the highest faith which works on in hope and patience, seeing nothing but the Father's face, desiring nothing but the Master's love, and thus finding day by day the highest blessedness of a faithful servant, the blessedness of entering into the joy of his Lord, a joy into which the Son of Man Himself entered when He "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and gave his life a ransom for many."

Lastly. One other word of hope and encouragement suggested by this our gathering to-night. I am sure such gatherings do real good to all of us There are many hearts that grow cold, indifferent, listless, because the round of duty has hardened into a dull routine in which they bear their part like mere actors on a stage, hearing no words of God, obeying no Divine call, yielding no spiritual service. There are many too that become sad, depressed, desponding because of trials and difficulties which they bear alone; they have no fellowship with their brother teachers; in all the long year scarcely one word

of sympathy is spoken to them; their burden of life they must carry alone, only God and their own hearts know how heavy and weary it is. Is it nothing, I ask, for such to join, as they have joined this evening, the great congregation of their brethren in the work; to sing with one voice their songs of praise; to unite in common prayer; above all to meet as children of the same Father around his family table at the great family feast, and to feed by faith on Him whose body and blood are the only life and strength of all? Is it nothing, Christian brethren, for all of us that we have thus met together this evening? Collected from all parts of this great city, working in the most varied departments of daily labour, separated by the thousand accidents of position, talents, tastes, circumstances, passing each other with hasty step in our crowded London streets, strangers one to another in those outward things wherein the friendship of the outer life consists, unknown by name, unknown by sight: is it nothing that we have for this evening hour met together in God's house, as those that are one in heart, one in will, one in love, one in our sacred work, one with our Father in heaven, whose children we are—*for* whom we work; one with his Spirit, whose dwelling place we are—*with* whom we work; one with Christ our Lord, whose members we are—*in* whom we work? To-night, my dear friends, we have testified to this truth; we have declared that we are not separate atoms, solitary beings, labourers working on in loneliness, but are fellow servants in one household, members of one society, brethren in one family, that beneath all things outward and tangible, all things seen and temporal, there is a bond of union, which is not seen and is eternal. My Christian brethren, if with these thoughts we have met together here, we may well disperse to our homes, and yet carry their comfort with us; if there be such an union between us, no distance of space can sever it, nothing outward can divide it; as we meet our classes Sunday by Sunday throughout this coming year we shall still be one, though we be divided; as we kneel down to pray for them our petitions will rise once more together as they have now risen here to-night: and as time after time we kneel before the throne of our common Father, surely we may do well sometimes to remember this night, and those with whom we have worshipped here; yes, and we may do well to offer again our humble prayer that "all we who are partakers of this holy communion" may continue in that holy fellowship for ever.

And now, brethren, "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified through faith which is in Him." Yes, thanks be to God it is with full assurance of hope that I can thus commend you to Him, for words of mine are not the last you will hear within these walls to-night. We are now to gather round the table of the Lord, and there He and not his minister is waiting to speak to you, to strengthen you, to refresh you, to bless you. Listen with reverence that He may speak to *you*; acknowledge your sinfulness and helplessness, that He may strengthen *you*; rest your fainting spirit on Him, that He may refresh *you*; worship in holiness, yield yourselves in love, that He may bless *you*. Call to mind that evening long past when another company met together in the midst of the busy streets of another busy city, when in the quiet upper chamber the Man of Sorrows sat down to the same meal with his lowly brethren, and *think upon all His* love. Look on, too, to that day when the noise of all this busy world shall have been for ever laid to rest—when another feast shall be spread, and the same Jesus shall eat and drink at

His table in His kingdom with all His brethren once again, and *think upon all his glory*. Yes, and be assured of this, that all the way from this our feast to-night to the marriage supper above; all the way from the cross of suffering to the throne of glory; from your weakest, saddest, loneliest hours to the perfection of joy and holiness hereafter, He, the good Shepherd, whose sheep you are, who has given Himself for you, still goeth and still shall go before you. Therefore, my Christian friends, you may indeed return this evening to your homes, and not fear to return to the world to-morrow with gladness and hope, for this will be a happy New Year to you, for He who goeth before you shall Himself lead you, though it may be oftentimes through briars and thorns of the wilderness, and day by day shall give you to drink of the living fountains of waters which proceed out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Plans and Intelligence.

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

No. 5.

'Tis now somewhat more than sixteen years ago, when, having had some little experience in a tolerably well ordered school, my removal to a distance became, under God's Providence, the means of my introduction to one far less favoured, and labouring under disadvantages, such as I trust no school near London now has to contend with. It was situate in the Northern suburbs, in the midst of a very mixed population, the upper stratum, and the well-to-do, only at intervals skirting the rather extensive district, while the lower class consisted of labourers and artisans, characteristically indifferent to better things. In addition to these there were a motley number belonging to a still lower grade, whose highest ambition was brick-making, and others who had no appreciable means of livelihood. There stood the school to which I was now introduced. My first impression of it was very unfavourable, but at this distance of time, I can look back with something more than pleasure (for I have abundant cause for gratitude), that my lot was there cast for so many years, and truly indeed have I there *reaped* the reflex benefits of teaching others.

Those who knew the school at that time would be hard to convince that it was the same, could they now look upon a well-built neighbourhood, inhabited by those who take an interest in the welfare of their fellows,—flourishing schools, displaying additions and improvements, which then could scarcely have been hoped for,—another faithful minister, now surrounded by an earnest band of teachers and children, displaying an amount of happiness and comfort which

then were all unknown. Ragged clothing and unkempt hair, occasionally side by side with some tawdry finery, dogged obstinacy and determined indifference, were then the leading characteristics of many of the children, reflecting I fear too faithfully their miserable homes.

But to return to my first introduction. An energetic faithful clergyman had recently been appointed to the district, and to this day I remember with delight the friendly greeting which awaited me the moment I entered the door. That greeting *secured* me as a permanent teacher; I felt that I should at least meet with sympathy. Had I been coldly received (merely *tolerated* I might perhaps say), as is far too often the case, the difficulties which met me, would, I fear, have proved too strong, and I should now have been differently occupied than in recounting the subsequent pleasing history of that school.

I was at once seated in a class whose regular teacher was absent, an occurrence by no means uncommon at that time with some of the staff, for the worthy incumbent who superintended his own school could not enforce much discipline, owing to the large amount of up-hill work which every where presented itself, and which gave him no time for effectually carrying out his views. Let it not, however, be supposed that no real good was being effected. Far from it, the mass was moving, the upper crust was breaking; but each teacher still taught that which was right in his own eyes, stayed away when he thought proper, while some of them I fear were too much impressed with the idea that they were bestowing a great favour upon the poor children, who, had they been properly taught, might earlier have given evidence of fruit-bearing.

Although in point of time I am writing of a date comparatively recent, the teaching was far behind the age. Explanation, or an attempt to interest the children, was the exception not the rule, and a teacher has been known to *do* the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, with a fair share of catechism in the space of one hour; while I have a lively recollection of one teacher who threatened to resign if he were not allowed to *teach* (?) the catechism in *addition* to the regular lessons which a systematic superintendent had introduced.

The want of cordiality, love, and real interest displayed by the teachers, naturally exercised its influence upon the children; and I should hardly be wrong were I to say that many of them *more* than reciprocated this indifference, *i.e.*, if I may judge by the evidence they afforded. Pelting their teachers was an amusement constantly indulged in, while gibes and grimaces were a matter of course. 'Tis true, as I before said, that many of them came from the mere

dregs of the population, yet am I wrong in assuming that different treatment would probably have produced different effects? At the same time I cannot forget that from mistaken jealousy of interference, or some other cause, our poorer neighbours were not then prepared to view with a favourable eye, those friendly advances which have since so marvellously elevated them. But in spite of all these adverse circumstances, progress was visible, and when, not long after, a change of Incumbency, shortly preceded by the acquisition of an experienced superintendent, was "*un fait accompli*," the soil was ready for fresh experiment, and a higher cultivation.

And now all at once fresh light comes o'er the spirit of my dream. Our new superintendent was one to whom our Church Sunday-schools owe an indelible debt of gratitude. He it was, who, at a period of doubt and difficulty, stepped into the gap, and led the forlorn hope which has since brought forth such wonderful results, and to whom, I think I may say, the Sunday School Institute itself owes no small debt of gratitude. But to pass from these pleasing personalities, fresh plans rapidly develop themselves, henceforth something like system is to be substituted for the pre-existing chaos. Teachers' meetings are instituted, rules for the regulation of the schools are adopted, a judiciously selected Series of Lessons is carried out, the personal responsibility of the teacher is enforced, the duty of acquiring, for his own guidance, the home-history of each of his scholars is encouraged, and we at once breathe a clearer atmosphere, and belong to a far better regulated family. I must however notice one point, in which the superintendent was not quite so successful. Considering the then transition state of the school, it required a firmer discipline than he ever maintained; I know his wish was to rule altogether by love, and I would not mention it here but for the heavy legacy which it proved to his less experienced successor. Still, where so much was unexceptionable, it would be ungracious to say more on that score, it may therefore suffice to repeat that to him under God the present state of efficiency, which the school enjoys, may be distinctly traced. But time moves on apace, and when some years later the writer of this paper had the honour to hold the superintendence (subsequently relinquished through his removal from the neighbourhood), he made it his earnest prayer and endeavour that he might emulate, at however great a distance, the example of his still respected predecessor.

The schools at this time possess a larger band of faithful teachers than they ever yet had, led on as they are, by an able superintendent, himself a former teacher in the school; the number of children is steadily increasing, so much so, that several have been reluctantly refused admission. Truly may both incumbent and teachers exclaim,

"The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." The infants, apparently increasing beyond the naturally rapid ratio, are superintended by an indefatigable servant of God, whose ample means are made subservient to the best interests of those about him. A senior class of boys and another of girls, too old for the ordinary routine and discipline of the school, meet every Sunday, under the guidance of experienced teachers, and there is good reason to believe that a rich blessing is being vouchsafed to this branch of the work.

I should mention that an admirable Library, containing some hundreds of well-selected volumes, is at the service of the children, the steadily increasing number of readers affording the best evidence of its appreciation. Sound judgment has been exercised in the selection of books, with variety to suit all tastes, and the once painful, though by no means rare illustration, of a full Library without readers, no longer exists: and yet even here this was the case at the time to which I first referred, when kindly-intentioned, but mistaken, friends, expected that children, indifferent to books at the best of times, would care to read their cast-off volumes, which having become too old or too dry for their own shelves were presented for the benefit of the poor.

An annual and well-organised treat to the children in the summer, a bountiful tea-drinking followed by suitable addresses to the parents in the winter, and an occasional distribution of rewards or encouragements are made subsidiary to the faithful teaching of the devoted band of teachers before mentioned, who together with their superintendent are the visible instruments which a merciful God is making use of for the regeneration of this quandom wilderness.

This sketch would be incomplete did I not mention that on my occasional visits to the scene of my former labours, I still hear of an old difficulty which attaches to the school, a problem which so few have yet been able to solve, viz., How to make teachers' meetings interesting as well as useful. That difficulty once overcome, there are few schools with which I am acquainted, that give fairer promise of an abundant harvest, to the mutual edification of teachers and scholars, and the material advantage of the whole neighbourhood, than that which I have described.

C.

CHILDREN'S HOMES.

CHILDREN'S HOMES! Dear friends and fellow-teachers, I have a word to speak to you about them. Banded as we are in a living labour, even that of seeking to lead little ones to Jesus (as in olden

time the women sought to lay them in his arms), we cannot but be sensible of many difficulties in the execution of this "charitable work." Among these I class the children's homes. All who have visited in London courts and alleys, and who have acquainted themselves with the habits and condition of their residents, our poorer brethren, must know what an obstacle to true religion is presented by those habits, and that condition. I do not say, indeed, that poverty is inseparable from vice; God forbid! but I *do* say that the homes of the very poor are often made more wretched by reason of sinful habits and pursuits; and the influence of such homes, morally and spiritually, tells fatally on such of our poor children as reside there.

In a neighbourhood of the type of which I speak, it was said to me recently, "*Sunday never reaches here.*" Oh, fellow-teachers! what myriad homes of our Sunday scholars there are where Sunday never reaches! and if it is Sabbath in our souls, does not this grieve us? The training of the children thus becomes most truly difficult. They come to Sunday-school, perhaps, with tolerable regularity, for some parents who themselves will disregard the Sabbath, will yet send their children to the Sabbath-school, with some show of regularity. I say some parents, for others, we know, are wholly regardless of Sabbath keeping, both on their own part and that of their children. They come; the lesson is, perhaps, the Fifth Commandment; but then we teach them also their duty to their God, and sure I am that many a child's mind must be fairly puzzled and perplexed to reconcile two duties which, alas, are so incongruous to them. Some children think, aye, and reason too. We teach them to bow at the mention of the Saviour's Holy Name, but, at home, they hear the no less Holy Name of God spoken in careless and irreverent talk. We teach the inspiration of the Bible, but at home they see it dust-covered and unopened, laid aside upon a shelf. We teach the duty of holy Sabbath keeping, but at home the Sunday (!) paper, and the most *un*-Sunday conduct of the parents, teach another lesson. We represent the Church as the house of God, the gate of heaven; but the feet that dwell in the children's homes *never* tread its sacred precincts. If it be so,—I do not say it is always so; praised be God, there *is* a brighter side to the picture—but in the cases of which I speak, what will be the effect of all this? What is the effect of smoke upon the plants we place outside the window of a room in a London street? We may tend the flowers and water them daily, but unless we can change the atmosphere, or remove the plants from the atmosphere, the smoke will do its poisonous work. So with our little flowers. Must we not fear they will wither in the noxious atmosphere of sin?

If we would prevent it, we must either try to change the atmosphere, or else remove them from it. In the case of the elder scholars, the latter course can sometimes be adopted, by placing them in Christian situations, but as a rule, I suppose, children must live at home.

What, then, can we do to cleanse the children's homes? We must ask for the pure breath of the Spirit, "the north and south wind to blow" upon these dwellings, but must we not do more than this? Not those who only call, "Lord, Lord," shall be admitted to the kingdom, but they who do God's will with earnest hearts. "Life is real, life is earnest." We must act, but *how?* Fellow-teachers, try to answer. The subject is unspeakably important to us all: our work is not in school alone. I believe if we would be efficient as teachers, we must be visitors at the children's homes. We can take into the homes of the poor, kind words and ready help, and, though in ourselves we are most impotent, we can take with us that Word which giveth life, and is filled with God's own strength. We *want* the parents on our side. The impress of the parent's mind will probably be stamped upon the child's. The child's hand is in the mother's. If mother and teacher travel the same way, then may the teacher hold the other little hand, and help to guide the child more surely. But if their ways diverge, which hand will the little one relinquish when it cannot go with both? Probably, the teacher's. Oh, how unspeakably important, then, it is that the mother's steps should wend the way that leadeth unto life!

Woodruff.

TEACHERS' PRAYER UNION.

We beg to refer our readers to the first paper under this head, which appeared in our January number, and we once again invite them to make the morning of Tuesday in each week a time for special prayer for the Sunday school cause, and to plead especially for the particular objects specified in the following list. We would also ask them to circulate this invitation amongst their Christian friends generally, and to ask them to unite in prayer with those directly engaged in the work of teaching, in the full assurance that if we thus agree as touching the things that we shall ask of God concerning our schools, it shall be done of our Father which is in Heaven. (Matt. xviii. 19).

SUBJECTS FOR THE SECOND QUARTER.

April 1st.—For the *outpouring of the Holy Spirit*, as a witness for Christ, upon both Sunday school teachers and scholars.

April 8th.—The *Sunday School Institute*, its officers and its work, especially that a blessing may attend its forthcoming Annual Meeting.

April 15th.—The *Ministers of the Gospel*, that they may be faithful ambassadors for Christ to perishing sinners, and that their labour may not be in vain.

April 22nd.—For *all Superintendents*, that they may rule with discretion in the fear of the Lord.

April 29th.—For *all Sunday School Teachers*, that they may be themselves followers of Christ, examples to their scholars and withal apt to teach.

May 6th.—For *all Sunday Scholars*, that they may be doers of the word as well as hearers of it.

May 13th.—For the *Parents and Families of our Sunday Scholars*, that they all may be true members of Christ, children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of Heaven.

May 20th.—For *those who have passed from our Schools into the world*, that their lives may be such that all men may take knowledge of them, that they have been with Jesus.

May 27th.—The *due observance of the Sabbath*, especially that Sunday trading may be discontinued, and our Churches filled.

June 3rd.—The *Church of Christ*, that all who profess and call themselves christians may hold the faith in the unity of the Spirit.

June 10th.—For *the spread of the Gospel*, and especially for all missionaries and missionary teachers.

June 17th.—For the *Church of England*, that in it the pure word of God may be preached, and the Sacraments duly administered.

June 24th.—For *our Queen and Rulers*, especially that they may order all things for the good of our Church, and the glory of God.

*** Copies of this Paper may be obtained Free, on application by letter to the Editors at the offices of the Institute, 41, Ludgate hill, E.C.

CLIFTON.

(Abridged from an account furnished by a Correspondent.)

A VERY interesting Meeting of Sunday School teachers and supporters took place at the Christ Church School Room, on Tuesday evening, March 11th, 1862. The Assembly, which numbered about 200 persons, included teachers from nine different schools in Clifton and Bristol, and several of the clergy from various parishes were also present.

The Meeting was presided over by the Rev. M. BROCK, Incumbent of Christ Church, Clifton, who, after the opening hymn and prayer, called on

MR. NORTON, the deputation from the SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTITUTE, to give a Model Lesson to a class of boys. The lesson was on the Parable of the Talents, Matt. XXV. 14—30, and illustrated the manner in which a class, between the ages of eight and ten, can be instructed for twenty minutes on a portion of Scripture without the least appearance of weariness. It was followed by another, still more interesting, given to a class of older and very intelligent lads, on the doctrine of Repentance, Luke xiii. 5. The chief feature

of this lesson was the way in which the boys were made to work it out for themselves, the teacher carrying them along with him step by step, and keeping their attention fully occupied with the subject, and with parallel passages of Scripture. The application was also very plain and practical.

The Rev. H. ALLEN, Incumbent of Trinity Church, then addressed the Meeting, speaking of the great requisites for the teacher's work.

1st. What he considered a prerequisite, lying at the root of all, was *personal piety*. Their great object, professedly, was to lead their children to Christ, yet, if they knew Him not themselves, how could they lead others? No one can set about this work in a right way that does not feel the value of his own soul, and the preciousness of salvation. This is the main-spring of all efforts to win souls to Christ.

2nd. He would mention *prayer*. Nothing could be rightly undertaken except in a spirit of prayer, and without it we cannot expect a blessing. The very fact of asking for a blessing would remind teachers of their own weakness.

3rd. *Preparation*. Too many under-rate its importance: a teacher, perhaps, says to himself, "I'm going to meet my class this morning, but they are such little children, I need only open my Bible, and say a few words to them." This is a great mistake; whatever the powers of the mind, or the readiness of speech may be, unless the subject be previously well-worked out, the teacher will fail in simplicity.

4th. *Punctuality*. If we wish our classes to be punctual, we must be punctual ourselves; if we wish them to be regular, *we* must not mind a little rain or mud. He referred to two of his own sisters whom no stormy morning ever kept from their post, though they lived in the country, and had a very long walk to school; and added, we must not expect it to be all sunshine, there will be difficulties, and must be sacrifices. He then said a few words on *discipline*, the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the class, which may be done with all possible love and kindness; and lastly, on *simplicity* in teaching, remarking how many teachers, with the best motives and intentions, fail, because they use expressions the children do not understand, consequently, they leave them too often where they found them; therefore, how necessary it is not to talk to the children, but to *question* them, an art in which he had sometimes seen persons of a humbler class excel those far better educated.

The CHAIRMAN then called on Mr. NORTON to address the teachers, first of all thanking him, in the name of the Meeting, for the very interesting Model Lessons he had given them.

Mr. NORTON said that in giving Lessons before such an assembly, it was not intended to set them up as *models*, for teachers are expected to find out in them, not only what to imitate, but what to avoid. In London it is the practice on these occasions to point out all the faults of the lessons, and very great good results from it. He then spoke on the teacher's office, stating that one reason why we do not have the amount of success we desire is because we do not realise our office. Teachers are "fellow-workers together with Christ." It is one thing to be working *for* a man, and another to be working *with* him. An engineer, or other skilled workman, may entrust inferior work to inferior hands, but those whom he takes to work with him must be raised to something of his own ability, although they have his eye on them, and his constant care. Many may imitate part of the work of Christ, as far as "He went about doing good," but his chief work was to seek and to save the lost. This He is still carrying on; and in this blessed work teachers are called upon to work *with* Him.

His own command to his disciples was, "Go and teach all nations;" and for their encouragement, He added the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Here was the secret of their success. Balaam is an instance of a man working for God, but not *with* Him. He blessed the people, he prophesied of the Messiah, he did all that God would have him to do, but not working with Him, not wishing to do God's work, but acting against his own will all the time. Jehu was very zealous for God, but not one who had fellowship with Him. It is a solemn thought that we may win souls to Christ, and yet not ourselves be working with Him. Teachers may be cold and heartless themselves, and yet bring the light of truth to others.

What, then, is it to be a worker with Christ? First, it must be working in God's appointed way. All cannot be ministers or missionaries—all have not the talent, the education to fit them for the ministerial work. But are there no heathen in our own neighbourhood to whom we might act as missionaries for Christ? God is still saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

In the second place, we must have the Spirit of Christ, or we are none of his. There is such a thing as proclaiming the love of Christ only by hearsay, not as a matter of experience. The heart must be first given to Him, then you take Christ with you to your work. And is there no encouragement in this truth? When our spirits and our energies are damped, and we labour on, seemingly to no purpose, how blessed the thought that we are not left to ourselves. *We* have not the whole of the work to do; we are working *with* Christ, each according to his ability; and that what we *cannot* do, that Christ *can* and *will* do. And let us not forget that if we share Christ's work here, we shall share his glory hereafter.

Mr. NORTON was asked to say a few words on school discipline. Much, he said, depends on the superintendent, but *not all*. His is the guiding mind; he must be the *head*, but the teachers must be the hands. A well ordered school will have a set of rules, sanctioned by the minister (for nothing should be done without his approval), and the teachers ought all to submit to and enforce them. If each teacher would keep his own class perfectly orderly, we should soon have a perfectly orderly school. It is a good thing for the teachers to be in their places a few minutes before the classes come in; for if left to themselves, the children will begin to play. It is ten times harder to bring a disorderly class into order, than to keep it orderly. Let the teachers spend these few minutes in speaking of things not directly connected with teaching; it will show the children they feel an interest in their concerns, and will draw out sympathy between teachers and children. In the class, if a child is unruly, don't let him alone; give him the *most* attention, and make use of the quiet children to preserve order. If the unruly one continues so, don't strive with him; send him away altogether for a Sunday or more. Above all, keep all employed. Do you find one here or there growing listless? Give them a text to find, or something to do, but don't let them sit still and do nothing.

Mr. BROCK here asked what was to be done with dull and stupid children?

Mr. NORTON replied, "If I may be excused for saying anything so uncomplimentary, I would remark that dull children are generally the effect of dull teaching. Set something before all your children; if you have one intelligent, and one not so, suit your questions accordingly, only make them all *use* the intellects they have."

The meeting was then concluded by a prayer, offered by the Rev. J. NASH, of St. Peter's, Clifton.

LEEDS CHURCH INSTITUTE.

(Abridged from the Leeds Intelligencer, February 22, 1862.)

THE annual festive celebration of the Leeds Church Institute and Sunday School Association took place in the Victoria Hall, Leeds, on Thursday evening, and passed off with great *éclat*. There were from 1,100 to 1,200 persons present; the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Powis, D.C.L., kindly consented to occupy the chair on the occasion.

Besides the clergymen and gentlemen who addressed the assembly during the evening, there were a large number of other friends present, clerical and lay. The speeches were interspersed with music, both vocal and instrumental.

The Rev. Canon Atlay briefly introduced the Earl of Powis to the assembly, and

The CHAIRMAN, in the course of his address, said, in considering the purpose for which we are met to-night —to develope still further the Leeds Church Institute—our thoughts naturally carry us back to the various stages of the great educational movement of the last half century, of which Sunday schools and Sunday school teaching may be said to have been the basis and the origin. If we look back some forty years, soon after the conclusion of the great European war in 1815, we shall find that week-day schools were confined simply to large towns, and to some few favoured places, and practically were unknown to all the great masses of the community. At that period Sunday scholars had arrived at a number which was then thought most extraordinary— at the number of 500,000. You will not, I am sure, be surprised to know that, at the present moment they almost number two and a half millions. Naturally, as interest was created in education, it was found, on the one hand, that the religious instruction of these Sunday schools was much hampered by the ignorance of many of the teachers, and by the obligation to spend part of the time in teaching the scholars the elementary arts of reading and writing. But then, as the advantage of reading and the necessity of writing became more familiar to the minds of the individual scholars, the movement began, which has ended in the establishment of day-schools all over the kingdom. Such was, in the first instance the natural developement of Sunday schools; and, I must say, that there is something in the constitution of our Sunday schools which appeals to the best feelings of every Christian heart when he contemplates the teachers, who may be counted by thousands, who are brought together, not with a view to any professional emolument, but simply by the ties of brotherly love, to assist their neighbours in acquiring knowledge; or when he looks at the self-denial and industry with which the Sunday scholars, whom we are happy to count by hundreds of thousands, give up a portion of their day of rest to acquire religious knowledge, and by their combination and co-operation to assist each other in surmounting those difficulties which attend the early stages of learning. When I speak of the number of Sunday scholars in the whole kingdom, I cannot forget, standing in this hall, the gratifying reception which Her most gracious Majesty, on her visit to Leeds, to open this great building, received from the Sunday scholars, when, to the number of 35,000, they assembled to bid welcome and to do homage to their Sovereign. And I believe that on no occasion of all those various times on which Her Majesty has met great masses of her subjects, has there been one when she was more touched by the display of good feeling and of affectionate loyalty, than by that by which her visit to Leeds was marked.

The Rev. CANON ATLAY spoke on

"The Progress of Education in Leeds," and after giving various details on the subject, said he could not help feeling that education had made, comparatively speaking, rapid and satisfactory progress in Leeds.

The Rev. CANON CAMIDGE next spoke on "The Distinctive Character and Work of Sunday Schools." In some preliminary observations, he said he could not refrain from expressing his high approbation of the wisdom which had been displayed by the executive of the Institute in the judicious arrangements made for the evening, whereby so much ample provision had been made, both for enjoyment and pleasure, as well as for education and instruction. A number of important subjects had been secured for consideration—subjects deeply connected with the well-being and interest of their beloved Church. He looked upon this institution, as he did upon all kindred institutions, as powerful auxiliaries to the Church, whereby they might foster an intelligent and hearty affection for the Established Church; and he thanked God that the Church of their forefathers was, notwithstanding the unceasing efforts of her bitter opponents, still the Church of the land. He then gave a short and rapid history of the origin and progress of Sunday schools, and he showed that there are in the Protestant Sunday schools of England the amazing number of three millions of children gathered together from time to time. Another very important fact was, that those three millions were consigned to the care and instruction of a noble band of self-denying individuals, who were Sunday school teachers, amounting to not less than 300,000. Was it possible to over-rate such an institution as that, and more especially when they considered that, in connection with their own beloved Church, those Sunday schools must be regarded as the nurseries for future communicants and future Church members? He did not consider that Sunday schools were one whit less necessary now that the religious element so much pervaded the instruction given in our National and Day schools, especially when it was known that so many left school at the age of twelve, and would be abandoned entirely to their own inclination at a most critical period of their life, if Sunday schools were not open to receive them and to stimulate them in the discharge of their Christian duty.

The Rev. A BARRY was next called upon to speak on "The Objects of the Church Institute." He begun by saying what the Church Institute was not,—It was not a society organized for party purposes. It was open to all, provided they would only take their ground on the broad basis of a common Churchmanship. It was in vain, he said, to disguise that there were parties in the Church—that there were two great schools of opinion dividing the Church,—but the existence of such a division was not peculiar to the Church. It might be found in every religious community, from the Church of Rome down to the Unitarian body. The only peculiarity of the Church of England was that the scope given to each member was such that all were forced to tolerate one another. What, then, was the Church Institute? It had two main objects, first, as an educational institute, and second, as an institute where Churchmen of all classes, and to a great extent of all opinions, might meet on common ground. He would venture to say why such institutes were important in these days. No one could look abroad, whether socially politically, or religiously, without seeing that there was a great party of innovation in the country, in whom there was a resolve to carry out what they believed to be a true principle, without the slightest regard to expediency, and, in many cases, to right. While there was this spirit on the one hand, there was on the other a great

conservative spirit, in every sense of the word, rising up in the people of England. He understood by a conservative spirit one not opposed to progress; one, on the contrary, which insists on progress, but will have it in due measure and under safe guidance, and which would direct the stream by those old landmarks which had stood the test of ages.

Mr. H. S. WILDE followed with an address on "Science and Revelation."

The Rev. W. R. MORRISON, of St. James's, Halifax, spoke on "The right use and subordination of the intellect."

The Rev. J. SHARP, addressed the meeting on "The spiritual and scriptural character of the Church of England, and the importance of being well acquainted with her principles."

A vote of thanks to the Chairman, and to the ladies who had kindly supplied and presided at the tables, closed the proceedings.

Sunday School Institute.

QUARTERLY RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

THE first Meeting in the present year was

THE SPECIAL COMMUNION SERVICE

for Sunday school teachers, held at St. Andrew's Church, Holborn, on Thursday evening, the 2nd of January. It was a very solemn and interesting gathering; and although the numbers present were considerably less than in the former year, yet it could not but be that many were strengthened to enter upon their work with fresh energy and devotedness by communion with each other and the Lord, in whose service they are engaged. A very earnest and practical address was delivered on the occasion by the Rev. R. F. L. BLUNT, M.A., who has been kind enough, at the request of the Committee, to allow it to be printed in the present Number of this Magazine, that many, not privileged to hear it delivered, may profit by its wider circulation.

A SOCIAL RE-UNION

of the Members and Friends of the Society was held at Radley's hotel, Bridge Street, Blackfriars, on Tuesday Evening, February 25th, at which there was a large attendance, every seat in the room being occupied. The chair was taken by J. G. FLEET, ESQ., one of the Honorary Secretaries of the Institute, at seven o'clock, and after an opening Prayer, tea was served to the company. Anthems and sacred pieces were sung by members of the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, and their choice selection and execution of them added greatly to the entertainment of all present. Specimens of the works of Handel, Spohr, Mehül, Boyce, Kent, Scott, Clarke, Nares, Farrant, and Buckland were given; and also a hymn "Gotha," composed by the late lamented Prince Consort.

These performances occupied the intervals between the short addresses, which were delivered during the evening by several of the Clergy who were present on the occasion. The early friend of the Institute, the Rev. EDWARD AURIOL, M.A., (Rector of St. Dunstan's in the West), spoke of the feeling of comfort which those who were working for God experienced in finding that they were not alone in their labours, but that others, far and

near, not only in the metropolis, but throughout the length and breadth of the land, shared their own heart's desires, their hopes and fears; and this knowledge of the work of those beyond our own circle, acted upon each one as a stimulus to increased perseverance. Teachers of Divine Truth are "the salt of the earth," and while they find how small is the number of Christ's servants in the midst of the world yet, in thus meeting together as fellow-workers with their Master, they realise the fact that Christ's Church is a body, and that it is a universal Church.

The Rev. JOSEPH HASLEGRAVE, M.A., incumbent of St. Peter's, Islington, spoke of the importance of that work, by which two and a half millions of children were brought under the influence of voluntary religious instruction on the Sabbath day. Among the Teachers of these children, union and co-operation is necessary, that they may employ their best energies in the most useful way for their benefit, and it is in this respect that the value of the Society is shown:—union is strength for Sunday School Teachers, and in the CHURCH OF ENGLAND SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTITUTE, they find a centre around which they may gather for encouragement, for mutual instruction, for guidance in improving their methods of teaching, and for all the helps in carrying on their work which the Society by its publications, meetings, lectures, and lessons, so ably supplies. It is wonderful that a Society costing so little can do so much: in a few years its publications and notes have found their way not only throughout the metropolis and the provinces of the Empire but also into our Colonies. To do this, the Committee have laboured hard and perseveringly. They have just completed the collection of £1000 towards £1500 needed to place the Institute on a sure basis; and surely the Church of England would not let its work be hindered or curtailed for £500. No collection would be formally made that evening, but all who were disposed to help might place their gifts in the boxes in the room, or by taking collecting cards for the Institute.

The Rev. W. S. SIMPSON, M.A., Rector of St. Matthew's, Friday Street, spoke of the necessity of lay co-operation with the clergyman in carrying on Christian work—not separate operation, but undertaken in furtherance of the pastoral duty, of making known the Word of God to those around him. He could not, singly, reach each child in his parish, but the teacher in the Sunday school could visit each child in his class. But as with preaching, so with teaching, it is of great importance that it should be made interesting enough to win the attention of the hearer, that he may apprehend the motives and principles of Christian faith and duty, as well as the facts upon which they are based. The intellect of the child should be developed, so that he may be sufficiently interested in what he has learned to retain the remembrance of it with pleasure, and to dispose him usefully to follow it up afterwards. This would require *study* on the part of the teacher, as every high work does, in order that he might himself grasp fully the truth he has to break up in simple fragments to the children of his class.

The Rev. THOMAS NOLAN, Incumbent of Regent Square Church, next spoke on the difficulties, the self-denial, the preparation, and study required by the Sunday school teacher to fit him for his work, as an assistant of the clergy in bringing in the lambs of Christ's flock, and in training them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Often these exercises led in the teacher to the real conversion of heart, which was at first wanting; and he illustrated this by an anecdote of a strange gentleman once going to a Sunday school, where a class being vacant, he was asked to take the

charge of it. When the reading of Scripture was over, he knew not what to do next, and one of his pupils told him the way in which the usual teacher asked questions upon and explained the lesson, and thus led him to analyse Scripture for himself, and eventually to become a constant and devoted teacher in that school where he had himself been taught by one of the scholars.

The Rev. J. H. TITCOMB, Incumbent of St. Stephen's, Stockwell, addressed himself to the inquiry, "When do Sunday schools fail in their intended purpose?" and especially referred to the deprecatory remarks on Sunday schools made by the Dean of Carlisle, representing the teachers as inferior to those in Day schools, their system of training to be defective, and, as a consequence, that Sunday became the dullest day of the week to the poor children. In making such a charge, he had unphilosophically attributed the defects of the system to the teachers; ungenerously ascribed the mismanagement of the schools to those who taught in them, instead of to those by whom they were governed; and untruly stated that children feel the Sunday school a burden, since it is known proverbially that they are always happy and cheerful, fond of their teachers, and glad to come to their classes. Yet we may learn even from our opponents, and such adverse opinions should teach us to study our Bibles, and to increase our store of information, to lead our clergy to examine and to improve the organisation of their schools, and to see that they are well supplied with efficient teachers.

The Rev. T. P. HOLDICH, Incumbent of St. James' Norland, Kensington, added a few words before the conclusion of the meeting, expressing, as one long a labourer in Sunday school work, his pleasure at meeting so large an assembly of teachers and friends to the cause.

These addresses were intermingled with the performances of the choir, which were concluded by singing the "Hallelujah" Chorus; and the Benediction, pronounced by the Rev. J. Haslegrave, closed the proceedings.

DEPUTATIONS

from the Institute have visited CLIFTON, where Mr. NORTON attended (and of which Meeting a Report is given in another place); and also at St. Philip's, Stepney, where Mr. REID attended on behalf of the Institute.

LECTURES

to Senior Scholars, at St. Mark's, Tollington Park, were delivered by Messrs. Reid, Sandby, and May, as announced in the last Number of the Quarterly.

THE NEW YEAR'S PUBLICATIONS

of the Institute, consisting of Addresses to Teachers, Scholars, and Parents, and a Scholars' Almanac, were issued, as proposed; but the circulation of none of these equalled that of preceding years. May we remind our friends and subscribers that by introducing and recommending the publications of the Society in schools where they are not now known, they will be effectually strengthening the position of the Society; and especially by obtaining a wider circulation for its various periodicals and school materials? Compared with the number of teachers connected with the schools of our own beloved Church, how limited is the circle into which our publications find a entrance! and yet they are the only ones which are especially prepared for the use of Sunday schools in accordance with the teaching and services of the Church of England.

The following books have been added to

THE LIBRARY,

for the use of the members, during the past quarter:—

Broad Shadows on Life's Pathway,

By the Author of "Doing and Suffering."

Dr. Hook's Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. ii. Donation by Mr. Heald.

Memorials of Sergeant Wm. Marjoram, including Six Years' Service in New Zealand.

Doctrine and Practice: Lectures by Rev. J. W. Reeve.

Life of Mrs. Cameron. By her Son.

Memoir of the Life and Episcopate of Bishop Bedell.

The Way of Peace. By Bishop Waldegrave.

The Bible and Modern Thought. By Rev. T. R. Birks.

Sayings of the King. By the Author of "Doing and Suffering."

Sermons in Stones. By J. Mc. Causland.

2nd Series of the Romance of Natural History.

The Committee, with thankfulness to the Father of all mercies, as well as with gratitude to those friends who have so liberally aided them in their efforts to raise a

SPECIAL FUND,

have the pleasure to announce that the sum of £1,000 was promised, and partly received, at the close of the past year, leaving £500 still to be collected to complete the sum of £1,500, required to enable the Institute to carry on its work satisfactorily. We trust that the large body of Sunday school teachers who have benefited by the past labours of the Institute will help to obtain this sum, by taking collecting cards for the purpose. During the progress of special appeals, the ordinary donations towards the funds of the Society become absorbed in them, and thus some £200 or £300 out of the £1,000 already raised would, in all probability, have been obtained, if no such appeal had been made. It is, therefore, desirable to complete the whole amount required as speedily as possible, so as not to absorb in it the ordinary resources of the Society; and if a generous response be now made, it is hoped that in the future, by God's blessing, the Institute may be enabled to carry on its work without again asking for any special effort on its behalf, simply trusting to the increase of the sale of its publications, and the number of subscribing schools, and members' subscriptions and donations, to cover all its expenses.

The Committee thankfully acknowledge the receipt of the following additions to the General Funds of the Institute during the past quarter:—

DONATIONS.

	£	s.	d.
A. Ranking, Esq.	5	5	0
H. E. Murrell, Esq.	1	1	0
T. A. Beddome, Esq.	1	0	0

NEW ANNUAL SUBSCRIBERS.

Mrs. Hale	0	10	0
R. Duncan, Esq.	0	10	6
Mrs. H. Thomson	0	5	0
C. M. Foster, Esq.	0	10	6
J. Kenworthy, Esq.	1	1	0
W. J. Tomlinson, Esq.	1	1	0
J. Cundy, Esq.	1	1	0
Mrs. Eveleigh	0	10	6
Mrs. Sweatman	1	1	0
Major Alexander	0	7	0

NEW SUBSCRIBING SCHOOLS.

Christ Church, Camberwell	1	1	0
St. John's, Charlotte-street	1	1	0
Dodsworth	0	10	6
Wellington	0	10	6
Nymphsfield	0	10	6
St. Nicholas, Cole Abbey	1	1	0
High Easter	0	10	6
Birch	0	10	6
West Fordington	0	10	6
Halstead	0	10	6

COLLECTION.

St. Andrew's, after Special Communion Service	5	13	2

Notices of Books.

BROAD SHADOWS ON LIFE'S PATHWAY: p.p. 348. Séeley, Jackson & Halliday. This book is one of a class that it would be in vain to object to, even where an objection is felt—namely, religious works of fiction. But in such objections we do not concur, believing that Truth is often conveyed with more power by such works than by directly didactic treatises. At the same time, the Christian critic may be pardoned for giving a word or two of caution to those who wield the magic rod, and enchant their readers, that they use their influence aright, with sound judgment, pure taste, and noble motives.

This is a digression, however, and the warning is by no means intended to apply to "Broad Shadows," in the pages of which our readers will find both pleasure and profit, as the author has skilfully delineated characters and events that bear out her twofold aim, the exhibition and illustration of the true nature of the Divine Life, and again, of its outward and active working.

We, ourselves, are disposed to add a third, and very interesting design, *viz.*, to describe the condition, trials, and danger of a large class of young women, those whose various occupations are all included under the general title of dress-makers—and to make known the plans in operation for their benefit. It is true that efforts especially directed to the benefit of one class may lead to the danger of undue partiality, accompanied by neglect of other calls, but where this point is kept in view and the tendency to exclusiveness resisted, we are disposed to think that such a special direction of effort is of very great value. To have a small field for labour, to understand it well, and to work it thoroughly, is one great secret of success. And so far as the details here given are authentic, we rejoice to find that no small measure of success has already attended such efforts.

HOME, 16mo. pp. 38. Wertheim. This little book is a lecture written for Sunday scholars of thirteen years of age and upwards. The name will show its object, and we can cordially recommend it, as sound, suitable, and interesting, likely to be a welcome and useful present in our schools.

THE ANNUAL MEETING

of the Members and Friends of the Church of England Sunday School Institute will take place (D.V.) at

ST. JAMES'S HALL,

on Monday Evening, the 14th of April, 1862. The chair will be taken by

The Right Rev. the LORD BISHOP OF LONDON,

at Seven o'clock. The Rev. DANIEL MOORE, M.A., Camden Church, Camberwell; the Rev. SANDERSON ROBINS, M.A., Vicar of St. Peter's, Thanet, and Rural Dean; the Rev. M'CONNEL HUSSEY, Incumbent of Christ Church, Brixton; and other Clergymen will take part in the proceedings.

Notices to Correspondents.

Communications are thankfully acknowledged from N. N. T.; C; Rana; S. C. D.; E. D. H; S. B.; W. S.; J. G. F.; C.; J. M. C.; G. N. S.; P.-B. P.

Contributions intended for insertion in the next number should be forwarded, addressed to the Editors, not later than the end of May.

Church of England

SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY

MAGAZINE.

1ST JULY, 1862.

The Teacher in his Closet.

A HANDFUL OF CORN FROM OLD FIELDS.

PRAYER.

PRAYER penetrates through all the clouds and spheres. It makes a man a kind of intimate with God, and by a towering flame, mounts him to the bosom of the great Creator, who not only hears his entreaties, but delights in his requests; invites him to come, and promises a pleasing or a happy return; which He shows in fulfilling his desires, or else in doing what is better for him. What, if I be not known to the Nimrods of the world, the Pharaohs, and the Ptolemies of this Egypt? I can speak to Him to whom they all, as well as I, must bow. My admission is as easy as theirs, and by my humble prayers (unless my own offences hinder) I never am debarred from access.

We find that those who are daily attendant upon great persons, do, by their intercourse, stand better with them than those, perhaps of greater parts, who live as strangers to them. And so it is, that he who prays often, by that means, becomes best acquainted with God.

We read not of any religion the thief had besides his prayer on the cross, yet we see, through the mercy of our Saviour, it presently conveyed him from a bad life to Paradise. And surely man, of all other creatures, would be the most miserable without it. When he is shut up in prison; when he is in any accidental danger; when he has fallen into displeasure, by his offence and disobedience, where is his friend, where his support, where his reconciler, if this be wanting? I had rather be deprived of all the solaces of life; yea, and the ordinances that tend to a better, than be debarred of recourse to my God by prayer. With reverence be it spoken, it is a kind a charm cast upon the Almighty, so powerful, that it prevails upon Omnipotency, and makes God, to whom we sue, to become a suitor unto us. "*Let me alone*" (as if He were holden) was the reply to Moses when He was importuned by him.

Doubtless it speaks God's heaviest judgment when men are seared up by a spirit which cannot pray. Who can conceive anything more miserable than a Judas, or a Spira, shut out from prayer? It deprives the soul of hope; and then is despair let in, with that immortal worm, the terrors of eternal guilt. He gives himself up to perdition, who neglects to give himself to prayer. Man is never so independent, but every minute he must need his God. And if he makes himself a stranger, can he expect to be heard as a friend? Other sacrifices, of the law, have sometimes met with a check; but this, from a serious heart, is an offering which is ever pleasing; and importunity does not give offence. If it prevailed upon the unjust judge, will not the most righteous God be gained upon by it? And, indeed, what can send us away empty but our own sins? For if it carry us not safely through all the roads of danger, the fault is in ourselves, not in it; like a faithful companion, when friends, wealth, honour, and life are leaving us, this holds us by the hand, and leads us to overlook the shades of death. When speech is gone, it lifts up hands and eyes, and instead of language, groans.

Owen Feltham.

Henry the Third of England, used to say, that he would rather converse one hour *with* God in prayer, than hear others speak *of* Him for ten.

Eckard.

"O Lord, who art the light, the way, the truth, the life; in whom there is no darkness, error, vanity, nor death; the light, without which there is darkness; the way, without which there is wan-

dering; the truth, without which there is error; the life, without which there is death. Say, Lord, 'Let there be light,' and I shall see light and eschew darkness; I shall see the way and avoid wandering, and I shall see the truth and shun error; I shall see life and escape death. Illuminate, oh! illuminate my blind soul, which sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death, and direct my feet into the way of peace."

Quarles.

When thou prayest for spiritual graces, let thy prayer be absolute; when for temporal blessings add a clause of God's pleasure; in both with faith and humiliation. So shalt thou undoubtedly receive what thou desirest, or more, or better. Never prayer rightly made was made unheard, or heard ungranted.

Quarles.

Oh, how hath prayer calmed the tempest of a troubled mind, yea, stilled the noise of the thunders at God's judgment-seat; it is the penitent's balsam, and the best music in God's ears; it doth compromise differences, reconcile adversaries, put songs into mourner's lips, and fill the disconsolate souls with ectasies; so soon as this Esther doth appear, the golden sceptre is stretched out; so soon as this angel doth come down, the waters are stirred, and there is virtue in the pool of Bethesda for all disabled and distressed creatures. Oh that devotion were but articulate, that repentance could but open her lips, and the penitent draw up all his desires into this short Enthymene; this is the true sweat of our brows, whereby we should earn our bread, the candle which should never go out in the house of the virtuous woman to enrich her family; yea, the key which doth unlock all the chests of God's treasury.

Reeve, 1657.

"Grant, Almighty God, since Thou hast recalled us to Thyself, that we may not grow torpid in our sins, nor yet become hardened by thy chastisements; but prevent in time thy final judgments, and so humble us, under thy powerful hand, that we may seriously testify and really prove our repentance; and so study to obey Thee, that we may advance in newness of life, until at length we put off the defilements of the flesh, and arrive at the enjoyment of that eternal rest which thine only begotten Son hath acquired for us by his own blood."

Calvin.

We count it reasonable to look to the Lord for our daily bread—to apply to Him for aid and guidance in the trials and emergencies of life. But how few are they who seek for the same aid from Him, and feel the same dependence upon Him, in matters of the intellect, in learning, in study, in thought. But why not? Is the nourishment and strengthening of the mind of less importance than that of the body? Are mental labours, trials, and achievements of less consequence, or of less enduring effects upon ourselves and others, than those of the body, or than the movements of outward conduct? The reverse is the truth. Then, has God limited Himself to one class of operations for our benefit, and is not rather his high encouragement and aid equally ready for all, and preferably ready for the most important? Is it, can be it, less needful, then, when we sit down to read, to write, to study, to think, we should lift up our hearts trustingly to Him, and cry,—

"What in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raise and support"—?

God can, and will, do this for us; and it would please Him well to be asked to do it. Let us believe that to pray earnestly is to study well; and let us be sure that He will refuse us nothing that we seek, in singleness of heart, only for his service and his glory. How many difficulties that seem insuperable would be smoothed,—how many blessed thoughts might be suggested,—how many forgotten things brought to mind,—how many wearinesses refreshed, if we trusted more to God and less to ourselves in the exercise of such gifts as He may have committed to us, and in the supply of such as we want.

Dr. Kitto.

Every Christian freely lays himself out by prayer for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. Each member of Christ's Church sues for all. There is a certain spiritual traffic of piety betwixt all God's children whenever they exchange prayers with each other, not regarding number so much as weight.

Bishop Hall.

Prayer is a term of great latitude, involving the whole compass of our intercourse with God.

Hannah More.

Prayer is a solemn address to God, which, when it is of any considerable length, consists of adoration, confession, supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving.

Dr. Goode.

None ask in earnest, but they will try how they speed. There is no surer and plainer mark of trifling in prayer than when men are careless what they get by prayer.

Trail.

EARLY RISING AND PRAYER.

When first thy eyes unveil, give thy soul leave
To do the like: our bodies but forerun
The spirit's duty. True hearts spread and heave
Unto their God, as flowers do to the sun;
Give Him thy first thoughts, then, so shalt thou keep
Him company all day, and in Him sleep.

Yet never sleep the sun up; prayer should
Dawn with the day: there are set lawful hours
'Twixt heaven and us: the manna was not good
After sun-rising; far day sullies flowers;
Rise to prevent the sun; sleep doth sins glut,
And heaven's gate opens when the world's is shut.

Serve God before the world; let Him not go
Until thou hast a blessing; then resign
The whole unto Him, and remember who
Prevailed by wrestling, ere the sun did shine:
Pour oil upon the stones, weep for thy sin,
Then journey on, and have an eye to heaven.

When the world's up, and every swarm abroad,
Keep well thy temper; mix not with each clay:
Dispatch necessities: life hath a load
Which must be carried on, and safely may;
Yet keep those cares without thee; let the heart
Be God's alone, and choose the better part.

Henry Vaughan, 1621.

Wouldst thou know the lawfulness of the action which thou desirest to undertake? Let thy devotion recommend it to Divine blessing: if it be lawful, thou shalt perceive thy heart encouraged by thy prayer, if unlawful, thou shalt find thy prayer discouraged by thy heart. That action is not warrantable which either blushes to beg a blessing, or, having succeeded, dares not present a thanksgiving.

Quarles.

Eyes that the preacher could not school
By wayside graves are raised,
And lips say "God be pitiful"
That ne'er said "God be praised."

(?)

GRATITUDE.

A GREAT builder was once engaged in the erection of an important edifice, and employed for the purpose a large number of workmen: they had each their allotted task, and, by their unceasing labour, the work rapidly progressed, while the master builder watched and directed the whole. One day, it chanced that a poor sickly man was nervously endeavouring to descend a high ladder, with a load almost beyond his strength; the master, perceiving his tottering condition, directed one of the other workmen to go to his assistance. As soon as they had both safely reached the ground, the poor fellow was profuse in expressions of gratitude at being so unexpectedly relieved; but his comrade checked him, by exclaiming: "I am glad enough to have rendered you this small service, yet let me tell you, friend, you have not *me* but the master to thank, for it was he who pointed out your dilemma and sent me to help you."

This, dear reader, is the only right spirit in which Christians should perform good actions. True gratitude is due to none but God, and any who take one fraction of it to themselves are guilty of defrauding their master; for the ability, in any way, to succour our fellow-creatures is not our own; we are God's agents,—channels through which He is graciously pleased to send many tokens of his goodness; stewards, to whose keeping are confided talents intended to be used in his service; therefore, let us beware how we accept the glory or praise of our works, be they ever so laudable.

Like their Lord, the followers of Jesus often meet with coldness and indifference when they have done their utmost to relieve distress, help the afflicted, or instruct the ignorant; indeed, sometimes they are obliged to submit to an actively evil return for their kindness; still this should not daunt them, nor make them "weary in well doing," for Christ has commanded that they should do good *whenever* He sends them the opportunity, without looking for earthly reward. We are in no part of the Bible taught to expect gratitude: that sentiment is, I believe, neither expressed nor implied throughout the sacred volume, except only in reference to thanksgiving and praise to the supreme Being. The pattern we should follow is traced in many places of our guiding chart, but no where more plainly than in Matt. v. 16. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and *glorify your Father* which is in heaven." It is very easy to make the light of our good deeds so fall as to reflect glory upon *ourselves*, yet it is not only wrong willingly to cause this effect, but our positive duty, as faithful servants, to take pains to prevent it.

I acknowledge this is a high standard of excellence, to which none on earth can perfectly attain, since our purest motives are all, more or less, fraught with self; still, just as a man shooting at a target, aims at the very centre, although he may be conscious of inability to hit it—so also, in all we frail, feeble creatures undertake, we must aim at nothing short of perfection; not deeming it presumption, for "it is God which worketh in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure," and in His strength we may be bold; still we should not despair when our best efforts after holiness fail, as they constantly will, while we remain strangers and pilgrims in the land where the Prince of darkness is permitted to hold such sway, in league with the corrupt nature which wars continually against the teachings of the Holy Spirit.

District visitors and Sunday School Teachers are, as a class, especially tempted to fall into the grievous mistake of looking on gratitude as the ultimatum of their desires. A very benevolent lady, on receiving commiseration and praise, on account of her great labours among the poor, remarked: "I do not mind what I do for them, nor how hard I work, so that they are grateful." This is one of the cunning devices of the Evil one, who induces many even of God's own children to believe they are working for their Lord, while all their efforts bear evidence of selfish motives, by the entire satisfaction they evince when grateful feelings are displayed towards themselves; and still more by their repugnance to continue showing kindness towards the ungrateful. If any are satisfied to earn the gratitude or praise of man, in return for their labours, they cease to be servants of God; for His labourers work for *Him*, and look to receive from Him, in due time, their promised full reward, (see Luke xiv. 14).

Having now clearly seen that we can claim no gratitude from our fellow-creatures, without failing in our duty to God, let us look on the subject from another point of view, and consider how far such a claim would interfere with our duty towards our neighbour. Gratitude is a thankful acknowledgment, either in word or deed, of some obligation incurred, or benefit received, which places the recipient of the bounty in the humble position of a debtor, and exalts the benefactor to praise and honour. It should be just as revolting to a Christian to receive such homage as it was to the angel, who twice rebuked St. John for attempting to worship him, his fellow-servant (see Rev. xix. 10, and xxii. 8, 9); for we are commanded to "love one another;" therefore, what we do for others should be in glad fulfilment of this command, and not to oppress with a sense of obligation, nor to promote our own glory.

Doubtless a difficulty will arise in the minds of some, as to what should be our sentiments, when any unlooked-for kindness is shown

us by others: first, we must pour out real gratitude to the Author of all good; and then we may freely esteem and love His willing instruments. St. Paul bids us: "Owe no *man* anything, but to love one-another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." All therefore that we owe, *i.e.*, the deep debt of eternal gratitude, God claims for Himself; but, blessed be his name, He hath strengthened His people in the bonds of Christian love, by privileging them to minister to one another the good He sends by their hands.

Young and ardent Christians, let not the power of doing good be a snare to you; let your high motive be *the love of God;* be grateful to Him when your efforts for others are successful; and often, dear friends, while you have been working with a single eye to His glory, you will find that your Father has prepared for you even present happiness, in permitting you to win the esteem or affection of some among those to whom you have shown Christian kindness. And if (as not seldom occurs) you are led in any way to administer comfort, or afford relief, to one of God's own suffering children, what joy is yours—for Jesus will hereafter say: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Rana.

DAY SCHOOLS AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

"Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?" Thus remonstrated the Hebrew law-giver with two Israelites who were striving together.

In relation to a difference which some would foster between Day and Sunday schools, perhaps it is a woman's feeling which would change the expression into, "Friends, ye are *sisters*, why should envy or jealousy be suffered to mar the strength and purity of sister love?" The work of each is distinct, though kindred; the labour of each, to be worth anything, must be prompted by love to Christ; the reward of each will be the Master's approbation, "Well done, good and faithful servant." It may be that on both sides there has been a tendency to depreciate the work of the other. I myself have heard day school teachers spoken of as though they must necessarily be mere hirelings, paid for executing so much work, and executing it only because they were paid. "The labourer is worthy of his hire," and no money is probably more fairly earned than the salaries of teachers of elementary schools. But it is a libel on (I believe, and have reason from experience to believe) a large proportion of these

teachers, to view them as accepting their calling simply as a means of livelihood. I have known, and do know, day school teachers, whose highest ambition is to win souls, whose scripture lessons are not only parts of the day's business, but are as a golden thread running through all its employments, as well as the first and best they can give *as lessons*; who can say in all sincerity—"this one thing I do," seek in my daily work and labour, that "God in all things may be glorified." And, when the often lonely position of some of our day school teachers is considered, the isolation which in many cases—not all—falls to their lot; the want of sympathy ofttimes with their trials, the indifference to their success, save as it affects the standing of the school with the inspector or the managers; when all this is taken into account, is not all honour due to those who in the face of so many difficulties continue patiently in well-doing? As Sunday school teachers we are greatly indebted to them, as every one must acknowledge who teaches children in attendance at a good day school. The habits of order, the knowledge of Scripture facts, the submission to control thus acquired, all make it a much easier and pleasanter work for those whose share it is to take up the Sabbath instruction. Let us then as Sunday school teachers appreciate and frankly recognise the work of the day school teachers, let us give them our prayers and sympathies, wishing them "good luck in the name of the Lord."

But do we therefore subscribe to the opinion that ours is a labour no longer needed, that we may shut up our Sunday schools, and leave the children to their home influences on that day? that the march of intellect is the triumph of grace? Far from it. The voluntary nature of the Sabbath school teacher's work gives it a character of its own, the day throws a sanctity over the instruction, the week day's lesson necessarily deals most with *facts*, it should be the work of the Sunday school teacher to shew how these facts are the basis of doctrines, which again must result in practice. Without doubt, it behoves the Sunday school teacher of the present day to seek some insight into methods of teaching, so as to make his lessons interesting, but let us disclaim all idea of running a race with trained and certificated teachers as to the form and method of instruction. Let it be our high endeavour to apply to the heart and conscience, in dependence on the Holy Spirit, truth it may be already known, as well as to impart knowledge to those who are still ignorant. Let ours be a ministry for God, of faith, of love, of prayer, and it shall be one of power, of blessing, of "a full reward."

Were it at all likely that this Magazine should fall into the hands of day school teachers who are tempted to think lightly of the more irregular style of Sabbath school teachers, I would remind them,

with real respect for them and their work, that machinery is not life, that a memory stored in the most correct manner does not imply a character influenced, that God has given "to every man his work," and that we believe ours to be a *God-given* employ. Yes, we take it from God, we do it on His day, we go forth to it in His strength, we look upward in it for His smile. And we mean to do it, till He Himself discharges us, which will not be till there is no need of schools, Day or Sunday, since "they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know Him from the least to the greatest."

Till then, let us "pray one for another," let us work side by side, let us "look, not at our own things only, but also on the things of others;" and let our only emulation be who can do most for Him, "whose we are, and whom we" joy to "serve."

Dora.

A HYMN.

(*From "Lyra Germanica."*)

I will not let Thee go; Thou Help in time of need!
Heap ill on ill
I trust Thee still,
E'en when it seems that Thou would'st slay indeed!
Do as Thou wilt with me,
I yet will cling to Thee,
Hide Thou Thy face, yet, Help in time of need,
I will not let Thee go!

I will not let Thee go: should I forsake my bliss?
No, Lord, Thou'rt mine,
And I am Thine,
Thee will I hold when all things else I miss.
Though dark and sad the night,
Joy cometh with Thy light,
Oh Thou my Sun; should I forsake my bliss?
I will not let Thee go!

I will not let Thee go, my God, my life, my Lord!
Not death can tear
Me from His care,
Who for my sake His soul in death outpoured.
Thou diedst for love to me,
I say in love to Thee,
E'en when my heart shall break, my God, my life, my Lord,
I will not let Thee go.

"THE WORK OF THE LORD."

None of us, I think, sufficiently realize the nature of the service which we are called upon as Christians to render to our God and Saviour; yet, it is good for us all, however active we may be in labours of usefulness, done in His name, now and then to look at the character of the work itself—the motives and excitements to it which are given to us—and the means by which it may be accomplished. Thus, perchance, our fervency of spirit, if it be happily possessed, may be sustained without languishing, or our service may be rendered more heartily "as to the Lord," or we may be cheered and stimulated to more energy and activity, and so be "always abounding in the work of the Lord."

The character of the work may be gathered from many words of Scripture, and from some familiar expressions which we frequently repeat in our Liturgy: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," is our Lord's injunction. Be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," is apostolic advice, and that based upon the strongest of arguments:—"Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." In our Liturgy, when offering up our general thanksgiving to God, for the mercies of creation, providence, and grace, we ask for such gratitude to be ours, that we may shew forth our praise, "not only with our lips but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to Thy service, and by walking before Thee in holiness and righteousness all our days." A yet more complete feeling of dedication is expressed by the recipients of the Holy communion:—"Here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee . . . . we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service."

As children of our heavenly Father, reconciled to Him through his beloved Son, we owe to Him the service of our lives, the employment of all our energies and powers in his service. As sinners, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, we owe to the Saviour ourselves—the souls which He has saved from destruction—the bodies which he has preserved from eternal death. As sanctified creatures, we are "the temples of the Holy Ghost," and to Him we owe the pure service of our minds, the incense of our spiritual worship in the new life which He has given us.

How solemn do such thoughts make us feel, as we regard the employment of our every-day life! How strangely inharmonious does such a life of dedication to God in all things appear, with the

business, the pleasures, the social converse, the satisfying of daily bodily wants, which fill up the measure of our days! And yet in reality they need not be so opposite to each other. "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do it to the glory of God," seems to imply that all the bustle, the strife, the toil, and the mere satisfying of material wants of this life, may all be sanctified by the self-dedication of the whole being to the service of God. He knows all our ways, He sees what work is before us in our humble course through life, "He remembereth that we are but dust;" and while his bounty provides the means of supplying all our earthly needs, yet they are so apportioned, that with most of us it is only by the sweat of our brow that we can eat bread, and only by carrying on the business of the world for the greater part of our time, and devoting the residue to Him, that we can be the agents, in His hand, of accomplishing the special work His people have to do.

The mainspring of all true service to God is the surrender of the *heart* to Him. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," is the great primal law. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me," is the Saviour's own addition to it,—plainly showing us that in the exercise of our affections, all earthly desires, all ties of kindred, all human sympathies and affections should be kept *subordinate* to the deep, all-pervading, all-controlling love of God, enabling us to look *first* to Him, as the chief good, not in Himself only, but as the source of joy to ourselves. That this primal surrender of the heart to God, by whose power and mercy alone it continues its constant action, is not to deaden natural affection, and not to hinder our loving whatsoever things are pure or excellent, or worthy of our best sympathies, we know from the fact that the *second* primal law is love to man—and that the new commandment of the Gospel is that "we love one another," while it also teaches us to regard all good things as God's gifts of mercy, freely given us to enjoy for our own use and benefit. "Set your affections on things above," is a principle of Christian duty, worthy of constant remembrance. There our Father dwells in his glory; there our Saviour sits at His own right hand, interceding for his people; thence the Holy Ghost descends with quickening and illuminating power upon the sons of men; there the countless myriads of angels sing around the throne; from thence the messengers of mercy come forth to minister to the heirs of salvation; there, by and bye, will be gathered the multitude whom none can number, of the company of the redeemed—there all is light and joy, beauty and holiness. Surely it is good for our hearts to be fixed there, rather than on things of earth, "where rust and moth doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." Let us apply

this test, that we may be sure that we really love God—for who can question that where our chief treasure is "there will our hearts be also"?

But the *mind* is to be consecrated, no less than the heart, to the service of God. It is indeed a wondrous possession, expanding its powers apparently at the will of its possessor, and giving him a marvellous influence over his fellow men, and the destinies of the world. The power of intellect excites admiration and commands respect, where the noblest affections are unappreciated, where wealth and position fail to exert an influence, and where mere physical force is of no avail. But it may be made an instrument of evil, as, alas, it has so often been, in the hands of those who love not God; it has been the medium of exciting the pride of intellect, of vain glory, self-dependence, and infidelity, when it has been exercised to excite evil passions, to make the true appear false, the false true; when it glorifies human capabilities, and ignores the Divine authority over, and as the source of, all human wisdom or strength; when it debases mankind by unholy and corrupt thoughts and desires, and excites them to evil. But, on the other hand, great is the influence for good which those may exercise, who seeking constantly the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, strive to make the powers of their minds subserve his purposes, and advance his glory. Is it not a noble thought that we may thus consecrate our intellects to his service, and bring our minds to "the work of the Lord?" *All* knowledge may be so applied, and not simply religious truth—the thoughts we cherish, the words we speak, the sentences we pen,—all may be dedicated to this purpose, if we only determine that the meditation of our hearts, the thoughts of our minds, and the utterance of our lips, shall never be without some reference to the great design of our lives, as the servants of the Lord. In our quiet hours of study, in our converse with friends at home, in our intercourse with the world, in our appointed labours in the Sunday school, when striving to teach the ignorant,—in all we do, let us try to remember that our mind is God's gift, one of the noblest He has bestowed, and that we must exercise it in trust for Him.

And the *body* has its service to render as well. Here we are described as "in the body," and we know how the exercise of the affections and the expression of the thoughts of the mind, require the bodily powers to bring them into active use. The various members of the body, the physical strength with which it is endowed, its ability to toil and labour, the skill of handycraft, the support it can give to the weak, the endurance of suffering,—all these are as much a part of the power by which we are enabled to carry on "the work of the Lord," as the will by which the body is set in motion, or the mind by which its movements are directed. As there are sins done

in the body, "fleshly lusts which war against the soul," so can the body be consecrated to God, in purity and holiness, and become a living "temple of the Lord." Many have not mental gifts to consecrate to God's glory—all have the service of the body which they can devote to Him. The labour of the hands by which the poor are clothed, the sick are visited, the blind are led along their dark and perilous way, the many acts of kindness by which our fellow beings are eased of some of their burdens, aided in their seasons of difficulty, comforted in the gloomy hour of sorrow, or encouraged to onward progress—the employment of earthly possessions, the fruits of bodily toil, in God's service, the dedication of "the riches of this world," to the promotion of the Gospel at home or abroad, or dispensed in acts of charity for Christ's sake—these are some of the ways in which we may carry on "the work of the Lord."

And a blessed privilege it is! We think those to be envied who hold high offices of state, who exercise great power in the realm, and have immediate access to the sovereign. How much more noble the service of the saints of God! They are the servants of the King of Kings—messengers from the Prince of Peace—ambassadors proclaiming mercy and deliverance; and the very nature of the work they are commissioned to perform is operating, in a reflex manner, upon themselves—freeing them from base and earthly motives and desires, lifting them up above the changes and chances of this mortal life—making them independent of the cares and anxieties by which so many hearts are worn, and so many spirits broken,—and preparing them by a heavenly discipline, for the exercise of higher powers, and nobler faculties in the immediate presence of the King Eternal.

It is our true dignity, then, to be the servants of God. He is pleased to accept whatever we render to Him, if truly offered as the sacrifice of a loving heart, if done *of set purpose* to promote His glory. This must be the great test, by which we must try our work, to ascertain of what kind it is. Alas! we may find that lower motives than these, unsuspected even by ourselves, have often influenced us in works of Christian duty, or have been mingled even with our holiest employments. At best we shall feel and have to confess that we are "unprofitable servants"—doing less than it was our duty to do, remembering what God our Father has done for us, what our Saviour has already done, and will yet do for us, and what the Holy Spirit is accomplishing in our behalf in that daily renewal of Divine grace by which we are kept from falling, and permitted to go on in the patient continuance of well-doing, knowing that by infinite love and mercy "our labour is not in vain in the Lord."

M. S.

The Teacher in his Study.

SAMUEL.

In the days of the Judges of Israel, the offices of judge in civil matters and priest in the temple seem only to have been twice combined. Eli was a priest, and also a judge; and Samuel succeeded him in both. This union of civil and sacred duties does not seem to have been productive of much good, either to the ruler or the people, not from any fault in the priest and judge, so much as from the sins of his children. Of Eli's sons, we read that they "were sons of Belial: they knew not the Lord." And notwithstanding the fearful punishment which fell upon them, the complaint against Samuel's sons was, that "They walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." No wonder, then, when Samuel was old, and he made his sons, with such characters, judges over Israel, that the people became dissatisfied. It would be well with them while Samuel lived; but he was growing old, and his days on earth might be but few, and woe to them when the men who should succeed him stretched forth the hand to take bribes, and perverted judgment.

Samuel, from his birth, was dedicated to the service of God. From his childhood to his death the scenes of the temple, and the services of religion, were familiar to him and his daily occupation. When only a child, he was carried by his mother, with pious thankfulness, and placed under the care of Eli, whom he served until his painful death. He "ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod." He was in the temple when the man of God came to Eli, to forewarn him of all the calamities that should befall his house. He saw the wickedness of Eli's sons, and the culpable weakness of their father, who restrained them not. He it was who was chosen to receive the word of the Lord, when that word had become precious; and to him was vouchsafed the second message to Eli. His resting place was within the precincts of the tabernacle; day and night its most hallowed associations were before him, and the sacrifices, being constantly offered, could hardly fail deeply to impress his mind with the holiness of God, and of his house. He dwelt more immediately in the presence of God; and this may account for the calmness he displayed when, in the solemn stillness of the night, God called him. Eli was laid down in his place of rest; his eyes had begun to grow dim with age, and

night had gathered around him. The lamp of God was burning brightly, as usual, but no sound broke the quiet which reigned over all things. At this season, Samuel's name was distinctly called. As had been usual with him, under these circumstances, he ran at once to Eli, to see why he had called him. But Eli had not called, and he bade the child lie down again. Again the same voice is heard, and again Samuel rises from his resting-place and runs to Eli, but the answer was the same—"I called not: lie down again." No suspicion as yet crossed their minds that the voice was more than human, for Samuel as yet had not received any communications from God. Once more the voice cried "Samuel," and then Eli perceived that the Lord had called him; and supposing there was something to be revealed, he sent him back to his rest, with the answer he should give when called again. "Speak, for thy servant heareth," was his reply; and then was made known the fate of Eli's house. And what a fate! Samuel lay until the morning, pondering, doubtless, on the terrible words which had been spoken, and grieving in his heart for the aged Eli, who seems to have had some presentiment that the tidings concerned him. When inquiry was made, Samuel told him all, and hid nothing from him. "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good," was all that broke from the old man's lips. But who can tell the grief which was pent within his heart? Who can fathom the sorrow which must have weighed him down? And who but can admire the patient resignation with which he received the heart-breaking words "It is the Lord:" No further words broke from his lips; but how much do they tell!

From this time all Israel knew that Samuel was chosen to be the prophet of the Lord. Closely following upon this revelation to Samuel came the battle of Eben-ezer, between the Israelites and the Philistines, in which the former were defeated, and the ark was captured. This battle fulfilled the predictions uttered against Eli. Hophni and Phinehas were slain, and Eli, ninety-eight years old, fell and broke his neck, when he heard not only that he was childless, and that his people were smitten before their enemies, but that the ark also was taken. This was too much. When the death of his sons was predicted, he could say, "It is the Lord." When they were slain, he could listen to the tidings unmoved; but when the sad news was declared concerning the ark, his strength was gone, and, in the bitterness of his accumulated misfortunes, he fell and died. Well might the wife of Phinehas name her child *Ichabod*, for verily the glory was departed!

During seven months, the ark remained in the hands of the Philistines, and then it was transferred to Beth-shemesh, where it remained for twenty years. Twenty years pass by, and during that

long period Samuel's name is not once mentioned. And they were years of sorrow and trouble to the nation. At length the people lamented after the Lord, because his presence was removed from them; but lamentation was not enough. If they would return unto God,—and Samuel once more appears,—"Then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only." They followed his advice, and put away their idols. Then he gathered them together in Mizpeh, and there he "drew water, and poured it upon the ground," in token of man's instability, who is as "water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again." There, in fasting and prayer, and confessing their sins, they sought the mercy of God and his might to deliver them from their ancient enemies the Philistines, who were again gathered together to fight. Samuel ceased not to pray on his people's behalf. "The Lord heard him," and the battle went against the Philistines.

Greater changes were at hand. The people, despairing of finding an upright judge in either of Samuel's sons, desired a king. The sin of the people seems to have been their want of confidence in God. Their prospects might have been as dark when Eli's sons were perceived to be so unfit to succeed their father; but they were removed, and the righteous Samuel became their judge. And why not the same thing again? Could not Joel and Abiah be removed to give place to one worthy to succeed Samuel? Most surely. But a want of trust in their God was ever a great sin of the Jews. Miracles might be wrought in their favour to-day, but to-morrow they would be ready to murmur, and seem to doubt not only His willingness, but his power also. God had led and preserved them thus far, and now, in asking a human king, they not only rejected Samuel, but God Himself, that He should not reign over them.

In the narrative which introduces the future king to our notice, we get curious glimpses of Jewish tendencies and Jewish customs at that time. The asses of Kish had wandered from home, and Saul, Kish's son, was sent with a servant to seek them. For three days they continued the search, but without success, and then Saul suggested that they should return home. But the servant wished otherwise. A *seer* dwelt in the neighbouring town, and he, if consulted, could give the required information. Saul's doubts as to where they should find the seer's reward were quickly set at rest by the servant producing "the fourth part of a shekel of silver," which, he said, "I will give the man of God to show us our way." This proceeding seems to foreshadow the Saul of future days, who sought the Witch of Endor, that he might know of things to come by supernatural means. We can hardly imagine Samuel, the prophet and judge of

Israel, taking what we think we may justly call "the rewards of divination." That there was a great object to be gained by bringing Samuel and Saul together we are willing to admit, but this was brought about by allowing Saul to follow his own inclinations. And Samuel's conduct seems to warrant this. "And as for thine asses, set not thy mind on them; for they are found." This tendency, or intense longing, of the Jews to seek information by supernatural means, is but a dark glimpse of the Jewish mind, and its inclination to practice divination, which had been so strictly forbidden by the laws of Moses. A more pleasing glimpse of common life is found in the same story. Saul meets young maidens going to the well, and enquires of them the way to the seer's house. This carries us back to the time when Abraham's servant met Rebekah, and Jacob met Rachel; and forward to another memorable meeting at Jacob's well, in Samaria. Saul quickly met the prophet, but before he could prefer his request it was answered, and matters of far greater moment hinted at; and before he was permitted to depart he was anointed king of Israel. At Gilgal, Samuel, after the manner of Moses, just before his death, made a solemn oration in the ears of all the people, and, as was so common amongst them, he recounted much of their past history from the day when Jacob went down into Egypt to the time when they made their request for a king. But before he recites their general history, he refers in brief to his own personal character, challenging them to bring against him any complaint or any charge of oppression or wrong. His appearances in public from this time appear to have been few. The people had obtained their desire, and Saul was now the man to whom the people would look to be their judge and their leader, and the leader of their armies.

One year after Saul's elevation to the throne had passed away, and the Philistines were once more in arms. The Israelites were in great fear, and looked anxiously for the arrival of Samuel, who appeared to delay his coming beyond the time appointed. Saul, in his eagerness to quiet the people and give them confidence, was guilty of sin—he forced "himself and took upon him the priestly duty of offering sacrifice." This was an irreparable step. It was evident Saul was not the man to rule Israel. He had not that confidence in God which was needed, and the injunction went forth, "thy kingdom shall not continue." Once more he was tried. Samuel came with the command, "Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have." He failed, and again it became Samuel's duty to denounce punishment upon him. Samuel himself did what Saul had neglected to do, and then came to see him no more until the day of his death. Yet Samuel mourned for Saul. He might

well mourn and pray too. But the prophet's life was an active life. It was no sit-down, quiet life. Saul's career had been one of disappointment, but Samuel has more to do than mourn. If one king falls from his throne, who is prepared to succeed him? No one; and so Samuel is again called from the privacy of Ramah to anoint another king. This work was also accomplished, and then he returned to Ramah.

He lived on for some eighteen years longer, long enough to see Saul add folly to folly, and to see much of the struggle between him and David for the kingdom. Years of trouble they must have been to him; for who can tell the feelings of the God-fearing patriot who lives to see his country rent asunder by civil war, and going backwards in sin? Samuel mourned much for Saul—the bright promise of his early life had been belied, and instead of guiding the nation with strength and wisdom, behold a war raging among the prople, brother against brother, and father against son. Instead of protecting his people from foreign enemies, they seem to have been more daring than ever; and instead of setting a bright example of obedience to God's commands, he was the first to set them aside when his own advantage, or his own fear was concerned.

The account of Samuel's death, as is frequently the case in Scripture, is very brief,—"And Samuel died," that is all. Yet the feelings with which the event was received by the people may be gathered from the words which follow:—"And all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his own house at Ramah." Thus the death and burial of a man, who had been prophet, priest, and judge for more than eighty years, is summed up in less than one short verse. He died—what more do we need? We know all the rest. We may not be privileged to hear the dying man's parting words to the surviving people around him; we may not know the confidence with which he departed from among his people, to dwell among the just for ever; but when we are told it was *Samuel* who died, we need have no difficulty in supplying these things. He died full of years, a devoted servant of God and a true friend of his people, who followed him to his grave with great lamentation.

E. M. C.

SCRIPTURE PHILOLOGY.

No. VI.—Our Lord's Idioms, (*Resumed.*)

Matt. xii. 43, 44, 45. "When the *unclean* spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he cometh, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also to this generation."

1. This is one of a few Scriptures which the hand of Fear, not Truth's hand, taking advantage of ignorance, has written with indelible ink on the memory and imagination of many a thoughtful and hopeful young person. The lessons which Truth copies into the hearts of such, all point to deliverance through the path of God's long-suffering, and disposition to forgive; and have no tendency to create despair. Terror commonly arises from misconception, and the want of that scholarly knowledge of the Scriptures, which it is the design of these papers in part to supply. The surest way to safety, holiness, and peace, is to make straight path for our feet; in other words, to come to a right understanding of God's Word; a sentiment embodied in the exalted strains of those wise and able, though antiquated authors of the old version of the Psalms, adapted to the season of Pentecost,

> "Come Holy Spirit, God of might,
> And Comforter of all,
> Help us to know thy Word aright,
> That we may never fall."

2. A Jew would not understand the word *unclean* in this Parable, as the plain Englishman does. He would take it ceremonially, and he would be right; for it is one of those Levitical metaphors of which we have formerly given examples. Clean and unclean are words of constant recurrence in the ceremonial law; and as we all know, apply to many things;—to meats and drinks; to states and conditions of the body connected with imputed defilement; to animals; and even to intelligent creatures; in short, to all things contact with which was prohibited or permitted by the Mosaic Code. These lessons were the rudimentary moral teaching of the world, as St. Paul calls them. Among the intelligent creatures the

fallen angels are named *unclean* spirits; the good angels, holy spirits; as pre-eminently, the ETERNAL SPIRIT of God, the Author of all purity, is named the Holy Ghost.

3. We have called the lengthened comparison contained in the above three verses, from St. Matthew, a parable. Many of our Lord's parables are, like this, only a produced simile. We think this is the right view of the discourse, as it is the most helpful to clear its sense and application. These parables are formed from all the walks of nature; the evil spirits belong to nature; they were very busy among the Jews in the time of our Lord, for that generation was exceedingly wicked for a people who had enjoyed so great and exclusive spiritual privileges; and the habits of the fallen spirits were better known by those who had dealings with them, than they are to us. The well-known fact that the Jews practised the diabolical art, is recognised in the question of our Lord, "by whom do your sons cast them out?" Here we have a parable formed from the habits of evil spirits; at least from what the Jews believed to be their habits.

4. Let us observe, first, the point of the address. Our Lord is remarking upon the extreme dislike, amounting to enmity, shown to Him, and to his gracious purposes, by that "*generation*," meaning by the word, not "the poor to whom the Gospel was preached," for "the common people heard Him gladly;" but the leaders, the great and learned men of the day, and of the nation; and predicting that they would grow worse and worse; then at the 43rd verse He introduces this parable to represent that state, and its consequences, thus:

5. "When the *unclean* spirit," that is, when a devil quits a man whose body he has possessed. Possession is a thing affirmed on good authority to exist still in idolatrous lands.

6. "When the *unclean* spirit is gone out of" such a man, voluntarily, for, as he enters voluntarily, he may be presumed to quit voluntarily, and not by forcible ejection always; when he thus quits the man whose body he has dwelt in, he, the wicked spirit, "walketh through dry places," sandy deserts, that is to say, where there are no human inhabitants, but only vacancy. So in Job: "Whence comest thou, O Satan! From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." Here the leader of the wicked throng describes his own habits himself.

7. "Seeking rest and findeth none." Like a stricken beast of prey he roams restlessly in the desert, but finds no relief from the pangs of the mortal stroke. Happy is *the man* who never driven by the anguish of some deep-seated wound, caused by the dart of the Almighty finding out his sin, has not, at any time, sought in

solitary wanderings the repose denied at present to his soul. Yet all this anguish seems to have been gone through by our great Sin-Bearer, if that experience recorded in the 38th Psalm also was written concerning Him, "Thine arrows stick fast in me; and thine hand presseth me sore!" But the stricken deer is not the stricken lion; man is not a devil; *we* have some part in Jesus; and how divinely flows that inspired strain of encouragement,—

> "Should'st Thou severely judge,
> Who could the trial bear!
> But Thou forgiv'st, lest we despond,
> And quite renounce Thy fear."

Infinitely to be preferred, at all times, are the deepest convictions of sin to such a hardened state of desperate resistance to truth as the generation of which our Lord is speaking, constantly manifest.

8. "Finding none, he saith, I will return to my house whence I came out!" that is, into the body of the tormented man, poor fellow! for we must not conceive that the person was necessarily a wicked person; there are several examples in the Gospels of both men and women possessed with devils, who are evidently the objects of pity, and not of blame particularly. Having sought rest in the wilderness in vain, the wicked spirit now re-enters his forsaken habitation.

9. "And when He cometh He findeth it empty, swept, and garnished." As our Lord is not here describing the moral but the physical condition of a Demoniac, we cannot admit the propriety of describing the emptiness of the house as a sinful concomitant; this emptiness, neatness, and garniture, seem rather intended to shew that the habitation is as much to the evil spirit's mind, as is a prepared house to the mind of any man in want of an abode. The drift of this description of the state of the house, is, that a place where he can make a human being miserable is more agreeable to the spirit's desires than a wild waste of wilderness where he can work no ill. How these spirits must hate man! Is it not well for us now and then to recall such trials of our faith, and such assurances of victory over the devil, as Martin Luther celebrates in those energetic lines of his,—

> "Yea, though the world with devils swarm'd,
> In fiery rank, and fierce array—
> We fear them not: by faith we're arm'd
> Through Christ we're sure to win the day!"

But an evil spirit can find no sympathy, or solace in, and possibly can have no direct communication with, or access to *our* spirits at all; therefore,

10. "Then he goeth and taketh *to himself* seven other spirits," of his own kind, and malevolent nature, "more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there," in the man's body; so that the unhappy man is of that class of Demoniacs, now, out of whom the legion was cast: so again was Mary Magdalene, "out of whom were cast seven devils."

11. "So the last state of that man is worse than the first," that is, more pitiable, more hopelessly incurable.

12. "Even so shall it be, also to this generation." And now comes the *moral* application of this parable, framed from one of the walks of nature; and belonging to natural—or rather preternatural—history; for as the poor Demoniac was *physically* worse in the end, so shall "this generation" at last be, both *morally and spiritually*. Such is the awful assertion of our Lord, corresponding to the oft-repeated predictions and warnings of the old Jewish prophets. Very wicked indeed were those scribes, and pharisees, and lawyers, before our Lord came and preached to them; but that very preaching, which believed, would have been their salvation, became to them their occasion of falling. Thus Jesus affirms, if "I had not come and preached to them they had not had sin." "And," it is written again, "although He had done so many miracles among them, yet for all this, believed they not on Him." They seem, it is also suggested to have put the top-stone to that tower of iniquity which was so soon to fall on their own heads, by ascribing those very miracles to the agency of the Evil Spirit himself, with whose habits they were so conversant; and thus "their last state was worse than the first"—spiritually more deplorably hopeless and desperate.

13. Although we have thus shown in the drift and scope of this parable, and in its true and literal meaning, that its primary application is to the Jews—we by no means shut out the awful lesson it reads to us all, but especially to the obdurate, who resist the truth. To the anxious, and fearful, and to such who have come to another mind about sin, it is not only altogether inapplicable as to any terrible prediction of their future condition it may be supposed to contain, but, on the contrary, for them, there is honey to be got out of the carcase of this now dead lion. For true though it be, that sin so hardens the heart that men go from bad to worse; yet it is equally true that the anxious, and careful, and humbled, go from good to better. The "poor and needy" are sure to gain in grace, and hope, and love; and strange as it may seem to some, those very depths of trouble through which the desponding have passed, will be amongst the things they will, by-and-bye, be most ready to bless God for; as it is written—to quote the blessed Psalms in metre once more,—

"He raised me from the deeps of sin,
The gates of gaping hell;
And fixed my standing more secure
Than 'twas before I fell."

Such has been the experience of many a true believer in all ages. We remember it is specially noticed and commented on by Cyril, among the ancients; and if any troubled conscience should be a reader of these pages, we have a comfortable certainty it will one day be his experience too, if he will only go forward, and "walk before God," as God advised Abraham to do.

We beg to subjoin a short note on the plan of interpretation adopted in explaining this, and other Scriptures in this series of papers on Scripture Philology.

Although the eastern ancients may not have perfected themselves in every species of writing cultivated elsewhere in comparatively modern times, yet they were proficients in, and masters of that kind of composition called fable, allegory, and parable. We never find in their apologues and parables the serious faults that a good many preachers and expositors among ourselves commit. For instance, these ancients understood and do not lose sight of the *unities* and *affinities* and *correspondencies*. They do not run out of the literal and natural, into the fanciful and figurative, as imagination prompts. As in the composition of a fable or parable, the unities and affinities *must be* regarded to give any sure sense and meaning to it at all, so in the interpretation, the same regard must be had to these way-marks of pictorial composition.

And this, in intentional opposition to the extravagant fancies of some particular schools, has been our own habit—the law we have laid down for ourselves. Even Dean Trench, a writer so much to be admired, and whose compilation on the sacred Parables is in every teacher's hand, has too often led his readers astray by mixing together things that have no affinity; and passing from the literal to the spiritual, and from the natural and historical to the figurative and fanciful, without that serious regard to accurate teaching, which the responsibilities of an expositor of Scripture seem necessarily to enforce.

Tenby. C. A. S.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS.

THE KINGDOM.

In order to express the different ideas of "the Kingdom" suggested to different minds by reflection on what is revealed, there are certain expletives, some of which, by common consent, have been added to the title The Kingdom of God and of Heaven, but which are not to be found in the Scriptures themselves. For instance, we hear of the "Mediatorial Kingdom," which term is found very convenient to explain, among others, the passage, "when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father," 1 Cor. xv. 24. And yet the design with which this great revolted world is delivered into the hand of Christ, cannot be met by mediation only; mediation may do as it respects rebellious man, but there are revolted angels here who are to be brought into subjection, not by mediation, but by superior power, and by coercion. Again, there are immaterial beings, and beings without intelligence, who are to be destroyed and subdued, before God will be glorified in the complete happiness of the Redeemed; as it is written, "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death; for He hath put all things under his feet." The phrase Mediatorial Kingdom does not, then, well characterise the kingdom of God, and of heaven, and of Christ.

There is another title, also, which is a good deal in use with some, but which has as little Scripture foundation as the former, to wit, "the Millennial Kingdom;" there is no text in which this title occurs as a name of the kingdom of God.

Further, we read in Commentators of the Visible and Invisible Kingdom, terms not found necessary to convey knowledge to us on the subject by the inspired writers themselves.

The following is an attempt to give a simple view of the subject, and to collect under one leading idea all that is prominently revealed.

It is obvious that every good kingdom must have a King; must have subjects; must have territory; must have peace and prosperity; must have duration; and, also, that there is another kingdom in the world in opposition to the kingdom of God, namely, the kingdom of the Wicked One.

Answering to this general description, we observe that God's kingdom has, obviously, God for its *King;* secondly, good men for its *subjects;* thirdly, earth or heaven for its *territory*, according to circumstances; the Holy Ghost, in his various rich communications, for its *supplies;* the indwelling of God for its *bliss*, and eternity for its *duration.*

But, inasmuch as a kingdom (Rome, for instance) is not "built in a day," and there will be to every kingdom a beginning, a progress, and a consummation, so, in respect to the kingdom of God, it was commenced at the fall; and, as far as we know, Abel was the first subject of it. Well, it went on; but, in process of time, it became necessary to separate it from "the kingdom of the Prince of darkness," who was fast usurping a universal government in its territory, which was, and *is at present*, this habitable earth. The next step taken, therefore, was to make this separation, or what was designed to be a separation. And it was done by calling out the seed of God's friend, Abraham. And now, "to them pertained," and exclusively pertained, "the adoption and the glory (or Shekinah on the temple throne), and the covenants (of promise and the law) and the service of God and the promises," together with evangelical prophets and teachers, and even miraculous superintendence and intervention. Now, this *divine institution*, with its endowments, means of grace, and accompanying and consequent heavenly supplies, is called "the vineyard;" and is "the kingdom" of the parable of the labourers in Matt. xxi. (for as to what the word *vineyard* may mean in any given place, since it is a metaphor, of course that must be judged of by the context *there*).

But forasmuch as a kingdom, in the course of its formation and progress to perfection, may pass through different stages, as this kingdom of England has done, so the kingdom of God advanced another stage, when it was put into the hands of the King's Son at his glorification to complete the recovery of it by His Word, and Spirit, and Power, which, having effected, he is to resign it up to God, even the Father, whose purpose it is, as the reward of his Son's filial obedience to appoint him King thereof, that over it he may reign to all eternity. As it is written in 1 Cor. xv. 24—28; Luke xix. 12, &c.

Hence it is that the Jews are said to have had "the vineyard," equal to "the kingdom;" and hence, when this divine institution, with all its religious advantages, unpossessed by the heathen, was withdrawn from them, and Ichabod written on their Temple's entablature, the vineyard was given to a race bringing forth the fruits thereof.

This is the *present* state and stage of the kingdom, still going on to its perfection, and still located on this earthly territory. But it is yet to undergo a far more wonderful and visible change than it has yet experienced. What that great change will be is very often entered into in Holy Writ; yet we, not having any experience of it, are not well able to conceive it clearly. This, however, we know, that its King will be visible; for "we shall see Him as He is;"

that its *territory* will be improved, for there will be "a new heaven, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness;" that its *subjects* will be immortalised, for "there shall be no more death;" that its *supplies* will be inexhaustible, for "He who is in the midst of the throne of it shall feed them;" that its *happiness* will be complete, for "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;" and that its *duration* will be eternal, for of this "kingdom there shall be no end upon the throne of David to order and establish it for ever."

Now, to this concise sketch of the kingdom, ALL the particulars of Scripture will apply; it meets every requisition of the various information given about it in all parts of the word of God.

For instance, if in special reference to those parables which represent the kingdom of God in similes, we want a key, this is it: "AS" a householder goes forth, and hires at different times of the day, *so* God has engaged "servants" in all ages of the world, some of whom have been stoned, &c. Note, the word "*as*" is *our Lord's* way of bringing the parables to bear upon the point, and not by closer affinities and correspondencies.

Or if, in special reference to the parable of "the vineyard," we want a key, this, again, is it, "*as*" a man lets out his vineyard to husbandmen, *so* God gave the *Institution* of the Old Testament, with that summary of His "statutes at large" in the decalogue, more perfect, however, in "THE TWO Great Commandments" to the Jews.

To us He has given a better Institution, and a "better covenant;" and by and by all will issue in those who "shall be counted worthy to stand before the *Son of Man*" (so called because He, the Son of God, *became* human), being put in possession of the completed stipulations of ALL the covenants, to the relieving for ever the oppressions of a groaning and travailing creation.

So Milton sings,—

> "And then at last our bliss,
> Full and perfect is, but now proceeds."

And so another,—

> "O præclara dies!" &c.

And so a third,—

> "Come, then, ...
> Thy saints proclaim Thee '*King*;'
> Thy title is engraven in their hearts,
> And with a pen
> Dipt in the fountain of Eternal love!
> Come, then, and, added to Thy 'many crowns,'
> Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth!"

G. N. S.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

III.

THE *Second Table* of the Law commences with the Fifth Commandment, the first of the six which teach us the love and service due to our neighbour,—that is, to all those brought within the extent of our influence in any way,—as the four commandments comprised in the first table taught us the duty of loving and serving God.

The *Fifth Commandment* lays at the foundation of our human obligations the honour due to our parents, those to whom, under God, we owe our being, who are our natural protectors in the helpless years of infancy and childhood, whose love and forbearance, whose patience and thoughtfulness endure longer than, and excel, all other natural affections. From this first duty, we are led to those which are based upon the same principle,—respect to all in authority over us, or possessing special gifts or qualities demanding our reverence. It is in this enlarged view of the commandment that we are taught to include in the answer in which we sum up the duty of man to his neighbour in the Church Catechism, not only "to love, honour, and succour my father and mother," but "to honour and obey the king and all that are put in authority under him; to submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters; to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters."

The glimpses we obtain of Patriarchal feeling in respect to the honour due to parents, presents the father as invested with an authority almost of a sacred character; and while of old, eastern nations degraded woman from her share in the reverence given to parents, the Jewish law placed her in the honoured position of being one whom God might choose, for aught men knew, as the future mother of the Messiah, and linked the Hebrew mother with the father in the holy authority of the parental tie. Disobedience to them on the part of the child was punished with death, even as idolatry and blasphemy (Deut. xxi. 18, 21), and it would seem thus to be implied that the wilful spirit which would not yield love and obedience to parents, would develop into defiance of all subjection to law, human or Divine. Our Lord, in the Gospel dispensation, confirmed the old law on the subject (Matt. xv. 4), and in his own life gave to all a pattern of filial obedience and subjection, love and tenderness (Luke ii. 49—51; John xix. 26, 27) while his Apostles also laid great stress upon this command (Col. iii. 20; Ephes. vi. 1—8.)

No limit to it, as to time or to extent, is given in Scripture. In childhood this obedience must be entire, with but only one exception, and that is when the parental commands manifestly oppose the law of God: in such case the course of duty is plain, "we ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts v. 29); but such an issue can only arise, when children have attained the power of self-government, which to all of us is next in order to that of God himself. In any case in which a child from this motive hesitates to do a parent's bidding, it will be done humbly, with diffidence, not without the reason and motive being lovingly urged in excuse, not without prayerfulness and sorrow of heart. And if in mature years it should be the affliction of the earnest Christian to see sins, follies or infirmities multiply in his aged parents, it will be his duty and his care to screen them from the reproach of men; to pray more constantly on their behalf, to endeavour, by loving entreaty and example, to win them to the right way; and if, in outward circumstances or inward feeling, they should need help or sympathy, to endeavour then to requite, by gentle affection and service, some of the many obligations which he owed to them in his own early days of helplessness.

The "honour" due to parents, although commanded by God as a duty, is, like that which He requires to be rendered to Himself, to be based upon the foundation of love and gratitude. Thence will spring the reverence of thought, word, and action—the submission of will,—the outward honour and respect,—the readiness to obey, to help, to defend, to serve in all ways possible which filial affection can suggest.

In extending the principle to a wider circle, these feelings will lose much of their deep personal interest, but yet will find scope for fitting exercise. As dwellers in the same land, we are under the Sovereign, who is "the father of his people;" and governed by the magistrates and administrators of the laws he gives for the good of the community, and by all who bear rule in his name. This is the principle of patriotism and loyalty taught by St. Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14, 17, and by St. Paul, Rom. xiii. 1—5, 7. In another relationship, equally recognised by Scripture, are those who hold the sacred office of God's ministers, who are "ambassadors for Christ." They feed us with the bread of life, "milk for babes," and "strong meat for men," and we are enjoined to regard them as our spiritual fathers, and to esteem them highly in love for their work's sake (1 Cor. iv. 15; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; Heb. xiii. 17, 18). Reverence for teachers who instruct our minds, masters who show us the way to labour with our hands, superiors in age or station, ability or gifts, is also taught on the same principle (Prov. v. 13; Ephes. vi.

5, 7; Titus ii. 9, 10; Phil. ii. 3, 4; Lev. xix. 32; 1 Kings ii. 19.)

Especial judgments are threatened against those who violate this first law of the second table (Prov. xxx. 11, 17); but, on the other hand, it is "the first commandment with promise" (Ephes. vi. 2, 3), an expression referring, in the case of the Jew, to the long possession of the land of Canaan as his inheritance, and in that of the Christian, as St. Paul explains it, to the prolongation of life and temporal prosperity, so far as these can be enjoyed by us without hindering our growth in grace, or injury to the eternal felicity of our souls.

Following this precept is the *Sixth Commandment*, by obedience to which we should indeed render to all their due, whether our superiors, equals, or inferiors; it is the first of those prohibiting all the forms of injustice and wrong, opposed to the spirit of the preceding one. In it the chief place is given to the bodily life of our neighbour, as his most precious possession, which we are expressly forbidden to take, or injure, or to cause to be destroyed. Murder was early committed in the world; and the terrible sentence first pronounced upon it (Gen. ix. 6) was repeated under the law (Exod. xxi. 12), and renewed under the Gospel dispensation (Matt. xxvi. 52; Rom. xiii. 4). But while this law was a merciful protection framed by God to check, by its severe punishment, the repetition of the sin of Cain, yet we know also from the explanation which our Lord gave of it (Matt. v. 22), that it has a spiritual as well as a literal meaning, and refers not only to the act of murder, but to all the steps which lead to it: thus teaching us, who, perhaps, never fear that we can be guilty of taking the life of any of our fellow-creatures, that it is needful to control the first impulse and desire of the heart, the angry, jealous or revengeful feeling, by which wrathful words might be suggested, and a deadly act of wickedness brought about. *Love* is the fulfilling of *this* law, as of all the rest (see 1 John iii. 14, 15), for by avoiding strife, and cultivating a spirit of charity and peace, we may, by God's help, check the passions which accumulate into murder in the category given by St. Paul (Gal. v. 20, 21; Ephes. iv. 31, 32). The meek and humble spirit of our Divine Master in submitting to injury without resentment,—not taking into his own hand the vengeance which belongeth to God (Rom. xii. 20),—is set before us as an example of the spirit of forgiveness and patience which we are to cultivate as his followers (1 Pet. ii. 19—24; Matt. v. 38—48; Col. iii. 13). So the Catechism teaches each of us the meaning of this law to be that "I should hurt nobody by word nor deed; and bear no malice nor hatred in my heart."

The circumstances under which the sin of murder does not attach

to the act of taking the life of another, are so distinct from those under which the same act would become a heinous crime, that they need only to be briefly mentioned. The civil magistrate has authority to punish evil-doing, according to God's law, in such a way as may be needful for the good and safety of society. Thus death follows the murderer (Numbers xxxv. 33), and the rebel against the king, who is the cause of many lives being lost in the anarchy and violence attending his act. But if, in self-defence, when attacked, we take the life of our opponent, when no means of escape, or any other way of overcoming him is possible, then it would be justifiable rather than to surrender our own life to him. In seasons of merciless persecution martyrs have chosen to die rather than break this law in defending themselves; and in the battle the soldier has sacrificed his life to preserve that of his commander or his sovereign, deeming the life he saved of more value to the community than his own. In such cases, as in that of all just and necessary wars of national defence and honour, it is not murder to take or surrender life: not so, however, when the suicide, to avoid evils he cannot overcome, takes away the life God gave him, nor when rulers provoke unjust or unlawful wars, and thus unnecessarily sacrifice the lives of their subjects, or of those against whom they proceed.

The Seventh Commandment forbids, primarily the breaking of that law of marriage appointed by God from the beginning (Gen. ii. 24; 1 Cor. vi. 16), by which a man and woman, united together by mutual consent, are made one, by God's decree, to live together in love and honour, and thus typify the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church (Eph. v. 22—33). The violation of this sacred law in the Mosaic dispensation was followed by a sentence equal to that which condemned the murderer to death, Levit. xx. 10.

Our Lord, when expounding this law, as in the preceding, showed us that it embraced analagous offences, of the same character, having the same tendency to deprave and debase the body as the extreme enormity of which it speaks, although in a lesser degree. See Matt. v. 27, 28. Hence then, if we would avoid breaking this command, we must guard against impurity, in thought, or word, or deed, and "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (1 Pet. ii. 11), remembering that our bodies are the members of Christ, and temples of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. vi. 15—20). To keep the "body in temperance, soberness, and chastity" is therefore the first and general application of this law—for from neglect to control the senses and passions of our corrupt nature, from indulgence in impure imaginations, by listening to unchaste conversation, by joining company with those of immodest and light behaviour, by the reading of sensual and depraved books, the indulgence and pam-

pering of fleshly appetites, an idle pursuit of pleasure, and, above all, by wilfully running into temptation, and from the absence of a sanctified heart and a tender conscience to resist the first degrees of the sin:—by these we take the first steps towards that downward path of sin and uncleanness from which it is so rare that any return (Prov. vii. 24—27), and certainly none recover without suffering, even in this life, the consequences of their sin.

How can we keep ourselves pure in heart? First, and chiefly, by seeking the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit by whom alone we can be sanctified, and then by taking watchful care that we do nothing by word (Eph. iv. 29, 30), thought (Eph. iv. 17—24), or deed (Eph. v. 1—12), by which to grieve Him, or dishonour our Divine Master, who has said that nothing that is unholy or defiled can enter into His presence, or behold the face of that God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

W. S.

SCENES IN PALESTINE, AND THE LESSONS CONNECTED WITH THEM.

No. IV.

THE SEA OF GALILEE.

"And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nepthalim."—St. Matthew iv. 13.

THERE are so many spots in Palestine which demand, by their importance in the Sacred Narative, the thoughtful consideration of the Biblical student, that whilst it has been a matter of no difficulty to select the earlier subjects of these papers, it becomes somewhat perplexing as we advance, to decide between rival claims, and to choose such scenes as will be most interesting, and at the same time most profitable to our readers. We cannot, however, greatly err in passing from the slopes of the southern Hebron (See third paper, Jan., 1862) to that northern sea, which is so replete with association, the lake of Tiberias, or as it is called in the Old Testament "The Sea of Chinneroth," Josh. xii. 3.

Any view of the Holy Land would be incomplete which omitted a glance at Capernaum; and we should have but a very partial insight into the physical, as well as the historical, features of Palestine, if we should pass over in silence that inland sea which was the

scene of so many marvellous events in the life of our blessed Lord, and near which He spent so large a portion of His public ministry.

The plain of Esdraelon has been already described. It formed the debatable ground between the northern and more southern tribes of Palestine. Just as southwards of this plain the mountains of Judah and Ephraim extended, so along the northern side of the plain there rose the mountains of Zebulon and Napthali. This northern part of the Holy Land was the allotted portion of the four tribes, Issachar, Napthali, Asher, and Zebulon. These mountains differ from those which are situated in other parts of Palestine. "They partake of the jagged outline, of the varied vegetation, and of the high upland hollows which characterise in a greater or less degree the whole mass of the Lebanon range, in contrast to the monotonous aspect of the more southern scenery."* It was therefore a land possessing great attractions of natural scenery, and yielding also a full reward to diligent labour.

It was considerably wooded, and therefore but scantily inhabited, much less than other portions of the Holy Land, whilst its contiguity to the Phœnician coast, and to the other parts of Asia, on the north, contributed to give it an isolated character, and to obtain for it the name by which it was not unfrequently called "Galilee of the Gentiles," St. Matt. iv. 15. Indeed, we find from the history of the Kings, that as some compensation and mark of his gratitude twenty of the cities in this district were given by Solomon to Hiram, king of Tyre, after the completion of the temple, for the aid which he had afforded him in its erection, 1 Kings ix. 11; and from this and other physical causes already described, the people became more impregnated with Gentile habits, and were not regarded so truly by their brethren in the south as genuine Israelites. Bearing this in mind, and remembering the wide object of the Gospel, as contrasted with the more circumscribed teaching of the law, we shall understand how it was that these northern tribes occupy no prominent position in the Old Testament, but were the evident subjects of our blessed Lord's solicitude.

Leaving all general features, however, we must concentrate all our attention now upon one particular part of this semi-Gentile region, and strive to form some idea for ourselves of the lake of Gennesareth. Descending from the Mount of the Beatitudes, St. Matt. v. 1, the waters of the lake lie open before you. We cannot do better than transcribe mainly for our readers Canon Stanley's graphic words: "Whether it be tame or poor, as some travellers say, or eminently beautiful, as others, there is no doubt that it has a

* Stanley's Palestine, p. 361

character of its own, which shall be, if possible, described. It is about thirteen miles long, and in its broadest parts six miles wide, that is about the same length as our own Winandermere, but of a considerably greater breadth. In the clearness of the Eastern atmosphere it looks much smaller than it is. From no point on the western side can it be seen completely from end to end; the promontory under which Tiberias stands cutting off the southern, as the promontory over the plain of Genesareth, the northern extremity; so that the form which it presents is generally that of an oval. But what makes it unlike any of our English lakes is the deep depression, which gives it something of the strange, unnatural character that belongs in a still greater degree to the Dead Sea, and in some degree to all lakes of volcanic origin, such as those of Alba, Nemi, and Avernus. The hills on the eastern side partake of the horizontal outline which belongs to the whole eastern barrier of the Jordan valley But the western mountains are varied in form, and this variety is increased when they are seen mingled with the long curve of Tabor, with the horned platform of Hattin, and with the jagged summit of Safed, standing out from the off-shoots of Lebanon. . . As we descend through the rocky walls which encompass it, its peculiar situation makes itself more strongly felt. Another climate begins. In the summer or late spring, all travellers speak of the oppressive heat. . . In the early spring it is not so; but even then the natural features at once indicate that we are approaching the temperature of Jericho and the dead Sea. The thorn tree, never seen in the higher plains, here breaks out along the hill-sides in thick jungles, and down on the beach the first object that catches the eye is Tiberias, with its line of palms . . Along the edge of this secluded basin runs the whole way round, from north to south, a level beach; at the southern end, roughly strewn with the black and white stones peculiar to this district, and also connected with its volcanic structure; but the central or northern part formed of smooth sand. . . Shrubs, too, of the tropical thorn fringe the greater part of the line of shore, mingled here and there with the bright pink colours of the oleander.

> "All through the summer night
> Those blossoms, red and bright,
> Spread their soft breasts," *

long before they are in flower, in the valleys of the higher country."† The entrance and exit of the Jordan are clearly marked by the

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* Christian Year, Third Sunday in Advent.

† Stanley's Palestine, pp. 370, 371.

greater mass of green vegetation; and this vegetation, there and elsewhere, is increased by the warm springs which abound in this volcanic neighbourhood. It contained two principal cities, Tiberias and Safed. The lake itself was a highway of considerable commercial importance; it was the chief route from Damascus to Palestine, and hence the traffic across its waters must have been great and constant. Its shores were extremely fertile, and especially so just in the vicinity of Capernaum, where the hills recede from the water, and leave, for some few miles, a large plain. In the lake itself there was an abundance of fish, and, as we know from Gospel history, this formed one of the chief sources of occupation for the Galileans. One further incident, for which we are again indebted to Canon Stanley, with which this paragraph must close. "As at Jerusalem the Rabbinical belief associated the Shechinah with Olivet, so here the selection of Safed and Tiberias, as the holy places of the last efforts of Judaism, was dictated by the thought that they were both within sight of the lake from whose waters the Messiah would rise; that at Tiberias He would rise, and at Safed establish His throne. 'I have created seven seas, saith the Lord' (such was the Rabbinical belief), 'but out of them all I have chosen none but the sea of Gennesareth."*

Now, it was upon this spot that our blessed Lord fixed as the principal scene of His earthly ministrations. He did not select the more refined and polished regions of Judæa, but He made this busy shore the great theatre of His mighty works. And it is by no means difficult to understand why, in His infinite wisdom, He thus acted. It was extremely populous, and was the centre of activity and enterprise; it corresponded, so to speak, in no small degree to the manufacturing districts of England. He would there have materials ready at hand of every description for His Divine labours; for within those towns and villages which skirted the shores of the lake was to be found a motley population. Not only Galileans and southern Jews, attracted thither by the inducements of commerce, but Roman soldiers, publicans, fishermen, sailors, merchants of Damascus, and visitors from Rome would be found assembled there together. And not only so, but the sea itself was adapted to our Lord's purpose; He could enter into a boat, and teach them standing on the land; or, if He needed retirement and rest, He had but to cross the waters to obtain the seclusion of a comparative desert. From every point of view, it was, for our Saviour's work, the most eligible spot in Palestine; and thus it was that Bethsaida and Capernaum became the chosen witnesses of His Divine labours.

* Stanley, p. 373.

Such is a faint outline of the features which distinguish the Sea of Galilee. Let us gather some few from the many events of which it was the scene, and strive to discover what teaching they contain for ourselves. First, it was upon the borders of this lake that our Lord met with some of His Apostles, and bade them forsake all and follow Him. "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon, called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And He saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him. And going on from thence, He saw other two brethren, James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, in a ship with Zebedee, their father, mending their nets; and He called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him," Matt. iv. 18. The ready obedience of these four disciples is a pattern of what ours must be as the called sons of God. There must be the same readiness to follow, and the same willingness to forsake everything for Christ. Ours is not a true, but a spurious discipleship, if we cling to anything more firmly than to Him. Earth and its attractions, sin and its enticements,—even the ties of kindred and of blood, if needful,—we must resign and give up at His bidding, and, with a sincere and honest purpose, live only to fulfil His holy commandments. But, secondly, crossing the lake, we are reminded, by its eastern shores, of another truth brought out in the history of our Lord's life. It was somewhere close upon the shore that He expelled the demoniacs out of those two possessed ones, who had inflicted such terror for so long a period upon the neighbouring inhabitants, Matt. viii. 28. Nothing could remedy their most melancholy condition; but they acknowledged at once the presence of the Son of God, and He cast them out. We might be assured, by this merciful act of the Redeemer, that nothing, however fearful its nature, could bid defiance to His power. Our sin may appear most firmly rooted in our hearts, but He can, and, if we ask Him, will, expel it. No matter how coarse its character, or how long it has been persevered in, He will help us to overcome it, until we sit teachably at His feet, clothed and in our right mind.

Nor can we overlook, thirdly, as especially bound up with this eastern side of Gennesareth, our Saviour's frequent habit of holding private communion among its hilly solitudes with His Father. When all was hushed in stillness, and the weary were enjoying refreshing slumber, He, we are told, went apart into a mountain to pray, Mark vi. 46. This custom of Christ confers an especial dignity upon the privilege of prayer. If He thus recognised the blessedness of prayer, of how much greater value must it be to us,

yet encompassed with infirmity and sin. The secret of our success in things spiritual could always be traced to the fervency of our prayer. We shall do nothing, as fellow-workers with Christ, unless, in this respect, we imitate His example. In the sanctuary and in the closet we must fill our lamps with heavenly oil, and sharpen our blunted weapons with heavenly grace; so shall we attract others to the standard of the Cross, and also fight the good fight of faith.

There is yet another incident connected with this Sea of Galilee which we must notice. Our blessed Lord, in the eleventh chapter of St. Matthew, thus speaks, with sorrowful indignation, of the most important city which bordered upon its shore,—"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day," Matt. xi. 23. Not a vestige of the city can at the present day be discovered. There are traces of Tiberias, but of Capernaum none. It is gone; not a ruin to mark the spot; it is an unknown name in what once was Galilee. And its fate conveys to every one an impressive warning; for what is true of places is true of individuals. Outward privileges are not abiding; if they fail to produce corresponding fruit, they are assuredly withdrawn. It is actual work for Christ which alone can survive the changes and the shocks of time; and if we are indifferent to our day of grace, then God will take away our opportunity, and in that one kingdom which is to be eternal, our place and our name will be sought for in vain.

And yet one other scene must not be overlooked in connection with the waters of Tiberias. The great tribulation had at last fallen upon the Apostles; they were feeling the bitterness of their first heavy sorrow; they had lost their best, their truest Friend. He had ceased, as had been His wont, to be with them daily. They were in their boat once more, fishing in the lake; the early dawn was breaking, revealing, in distinct outline, every cleft down the rocky sides of those enclosing hills. One solitary figure was standing on the beach, and in the stillness of the morning air, not yet disturbed by the waking hum of the surrounding villages, came a gentle voice across the water, calling, after the Eastern fashion, "Children," and bidding them cast their nets on the right side of the ship, and promising what they should find, John xxi. 6. Then came the unexpected supply, and with it the recognition of their Lord. We need not trace out all that followed, but, omitting the incidents of some of its features, there will still remain an analogy to one event which will happen in the life of the Christian. There will be to him a night when he shall take nothing, a night of darkness, though not of toil, but it shall be followed by a morning,

lovelier far than ever broke over the earthly Palestine, and as it dawns, and the darkness passes away, he shall discover the form and hear the voice of his most beloved Lord, bidding him hasten and enjoy the everlasting banquet which Christ will have prepared for them who love Him.

The Teacher in his School.

THE ISLAND OF THE BLIND.

(Translated from "Le Bonhomme Pensif.")

In the midst of the ocean lay an island on which no one had ever yet landed. Its precipitous cliffs and rocks extending far into the sea all around, seemed to forbid the approach of all seafarers.

But one tempestuous day, a large vessel dismasted and rudderless, was cast on these inhospitable shores. Uplifted by immense waves, it seemed to spring out of the water, then fall back again into the abyss, to reappear once more. The sport of currents and waves, it was thrown over many crags, and soon found itself a short disance from the island, but lost in a labyrinth of rocks which from time to time shewed their black and gushing heads.

Most of those on board had been swept away by the sea, or crushed by the falling masts. Night arrived to increase the horrors of the situation of those who yet survived. They closed their eyes, and awaited the approaching and inevitable moment when they also would be engulfed. By break of day, the vessel had disappeared; some pieces of wreck alone had been hurled on the barriers of rock, by the last efforts of the tempest. When the sun had mounted high enough to light up one of the small bays, his rays fell on a body stretched on the sand. That body at first remained motionless; but, as by degrees the sun's warmth quickened the circulation of the blood, signs of life were apparent. A leg moved, an arm stretched itself—then the other also: the eyes opened, but unable to bear the dazzling light, as quickly closed again. Astonished at finding life revive, the poor ship-wrecked man sat up. He remained some time in this position. At last he was able to stand upright and cast his eyes all around him. Before him the sea, still in commotion, was roaring fearfully; a wave approached, and he instinctively recoiled from it. His eyes turned then to the land. A path and a stream

were before him; he drank of the latter, and then followed the path, thanking God for his preservation from ship-wreck. He soon found himself in the midst of a magnificent country. Cultivated fields, orchards, meadows, lofty forests, hills and valleys, formed a varied and enchanting landscape. All at once he heard human voices; his heart beat violently. Who are these people? How will they receive him? He perceived three men, who were talking with animation, and apparently about himself. When the islanders came within a moderate distance they cautiously stopped. "Stranger," cried the oldest of the three, "who are you? Whence do you come? What is your motive for coming into this country?" "I am one of the subjects of the powerful queen of the ocean; the seat of her empire is situated at a great distance towards the rising sun. I embarked as a surgeon on board of one of her vessels. The tempest destroyed our floating house, and of all the men that we had on board I only escaped. I am now at your mercy. But I see by the beauty of your country that Providence has not thrown me in the midst of savages, and that I may expect from you the help of which I am in need." Scarcely had the surgeon completed his narrative, when the three men approached, congratulated him on his happy deliverance, and promised that he should find amongst them the hospitality to which his misfortunes entitled him. The ship-wrecked man expressed to them his gratitude. Whilst he was speaking he was surprised to see that their eyes were hermetically sealed. All four began to move forward. Many persons employed in agricultural labours saluted them on their way. In a very few moments the inhabitants of the nearest village were apprised of the stranger's arrival. The surgeon imagined it was the delusion of a dream, whilst observing the rapidity with which these people ran hither and thither, and managed their affairs without the assistance of sight. He was not slow in discovering that they were really blind, and that the want of sight was partly compensated by the extraordinary development of the faculties of hearing, smelling and feeling. They heard at great distances, and distinguished the lightest shades of sound; their nostrils, constantly dilated, indicated the numerous services rendered them by their olfactory nerves; the sense of touch, extremely perfect, was aided by a prodigious memory for things and places. Their infirmity did not appear to annoy them; they were not even conscious of it. The delightful joys which light alone bestows were to them entirely unknown, and the word *sight* had for them no signification.

The ship-wrecked man was well received. His hunger satisfied and his clothes changed, he manifested a desire to take some repose. Their amiable hospitality touched him deeply, but his heart was

grieved at the thought that his hosts were wholly deprived of those inexpressible pleasures of which light is the source; they could not, like him, admire the beauties of nature, the verdure of the woods and meadows, the brilliant colours of the fruits and flowers. The mother could never contemplate the fresh and glowing cheeks of her child, nor could the latter experience the sweetness of the maternal smile. "Ah," said the stranger to himself, filled with the tenderest compassion, "What happiness for me, could I give sight to these brave people! How happy should I be could I witness their surprise and admiration at all the marvels which for the first time would burst upon them." I will not describe to you, my children, all the anxieties to which this idea gave rise; he was constantly beset with it. The indifference of his hosts did not at all cool down his desire. The man who wishes to do good to his fellow-creatures, does not wait till they can appreciate and desire his benevolence. At last, after much consideration, he came to the conclusion that perhaps the eyes of his kind entertainers were in good condition; that their blindness was only caused by the eyelids being held down by a slight membrane which adhered to the edges, and that an operation would be neither difficult or painful. One evening while a little girl of five or six years of age was sitting on his knee, "Little one," said he, "when you go to the strawberry wood to hear the harmonies of the water-fall, and the warbling of the birds, do you not suffer from the long walk?" "Yes," she replied, "it tires me very much: but I am so happy in the forest that I take courage at the thought of the pleasures which await me." "Well, my child, do not be afraid, I am going to give you a little pain that I may render you a great service." Saying these words he drew out his lancet, and holding the child firmly, he gently cut the fatal membrane. The released eyelid slowly raised itself, and disclosed a blue eye of good formation. A second operation, equally succesful, opened the door to the other prisoner. "Ah," cried the child with amazement, as she beheld for the first time the mild light of the setting sun. The news of this event spread rapidly in all quarters. The next day, the islanders crowded to the surgeon: without quite understanding they still envied the happiness of the child. They submitted to a similar operation, and in less than a week all the inhabitants of the island were rejoicing in the blessing of sight. Who could describe the cries of joy and wonder, the charming surprises? "Ah," exclaimed one, "what happiness! how could we exist without sight? We thought ourselves happy, but we were deceived."

LESSONS ON THE LITURGY, FOR BIBLE CLASSES.

LESSON XXVIII.

Singing—as a part of Divine Worship.

After the Collects which we have been considering, there is a sentence in the Rubric which says, that "in quires and places where they sing, here followeth the anthem." A quire, or choir, means either a number of singers who sing in chorus, or the place where they meet to sing: here it means the latter. An anthem means a piece of sacred music, sung in parts; *i.e.*, not all the voices singing the same note, but making chords or harmonies.

In cathedrals, anthems are sung at this part of the service, but in almost all our parish churches, instead of an anthem, we sing hymns or psalms; and I now wish to say a few words about the difference between them, and then about the singing itself.

In a cathedral you see (on Sundays) two companies of boys, called choristers, half on one side of the chancel, half on the other (with some men also), all dressed in white surplices—these are called choristers; and they altogether sing the anthem, whilst the people listen, for the music of the anthem is long and difficult.

Now, you go to church to worship God by singing as well as praying, and it rests with yourselves whether you get any good from the anthem. You cannot join in it; but if you have the words, you can follow the singers, and your heart can go with the words they sing. But in churches where a psalm or hymn only is sung, the tune is, of course, short, and comparatively easy, so that all may join; for there is not one person out of a hundred who cannot join at all, if he tries.

So that while anthem singing is very beautiful, and the noble music may carry our thoughts up to heaven, if our hearts go with the words, we have cause to be thankful that our Church also encourages us to sing psalms and hymns—for us to join in, not merely to listen to.

Appended to the Prayer Book are the Psalms of David, turned into metre for singing. This was done a long time back, and not well done; so now in most churches a book of hymns is used instead, which has also the advantage of introducing special songs of praise, suited to our Christian festivals, and of applying the fulness of our Gospel privileges to this part of public worship.

Now, then, let us see what the Bible says about singing, as part of our worship of God. We read of Miriam, and other Jewesses, singing praises to God for having delivered them from their enemies, and they used timbrels at the same time, Ex. xv. 20, 21. And Moses then composed a song or hymn, which is contained in the same chapter, and which was sung by him and the Israelites. Deborah did the same thing, Judges v. 1. But there was one man called the Sweet Psalmist of Israel (2 Sam. xxiv. 1). You know who that was, and what name we give to the Songs he wrote. We will read a few texts, in which he speaks of singing to God as a part of worship. Read Ps. xiii. 6; lvii. 7; lix. 16, 17; c. 1; cxliv. 9.

Then we will find other texts which also speak of devotional singing, 1 Chron.

ix. 33; xv. 19; 2 Chron. xxiii. 13, 18; Ezra ii. 41; Neh. xii. 27, 42, 45. We can find it, too, in the New Testament, Acts xvi. 25, Ephes. v. 19; Col. iii. 16; James v. 13. It is described as part of the service of the angels, Job. xxxviii. 7; Luke ii. 13, 14; as part of the service of God's redeemed saints in heaven, Rev. v. 9; xiv. 3: xv. 3; and, lastly, we have the example of our Saviour Himself, who, in the same night that He was betrayed, sang a hymn with his disciples, Matt. xxvi. 30.

How, then, should this part of the service be performed? I will tell you three things there ought to be—

1st. Reverence; 2nd. Heartiness; 3rd. Understanding.

1st. Reverence—for singing to God is as solemn as praying to Him; so whilst you sing, be reverent. He is great and glorious. Remember the hymn,

"How glorious is our Heavenly King."

2nd. Heartiness—for the words in Is. xxix. 13 apply as much to singing as to prayer. Your hymns are not pleasing to Him, if sung for the praise of men, or for mere enjoyment, without seeking to lift up the heart too. God can tell *why* you sing.

3rd. Understanding—as St. Paul says, in 1 Cor. xiv. 15. Think, then, of what you sing, and God will accept and answer you.

LESSON XXIX.

The Litany.

Our course of Lessons has brought us to the *Litany* (derived from a Greek word, signifying "to pray"), which is introduced into this part of the service, but originally formed a separate one from the others with which it is now incorporated. Litanies were employed in the early Church, especially in seasons of affliction. That which we now use is derived from one composed by Gregory the Great, about the year 600. Subsequent Popes introduced sentences into it, containing invocations to saints, and other erroneous sentiments, which were expunged at the Reformation, when it was adapted to the pure and simple form of worship for the English Church.

It will take some time to go through the whole, but it will be well for us thoroughly to understand the different prayers, for there is scarcely anything we could ask of God, for our individual necessity, which is not to be found in this general supplication. It is usually divided into four parts, invocation, deprecation, intercession, and the closing supplications. Each of these sentences deserve our careful attention.

The invocation is contained in the first five sentences, in which we solemnly address the Three Persons of the Trinity, mingling our cry for mercy with a humble confession of our guilt, pleading our misery and our sin. The minister repeats the first sentence, and then the congregation repeat the response, printed in italics. The first four answers are the same as the words of the minister; and after that the congregation say what completes each sentence. Thus you will notice here what has been already referred to, *viz.*, that the minister and the people share in the service.

We will now read the first four sentences. Notice, in the first, the comma after the word Father. God is our Father, as He Himself has taught us in his own Word, and as Jesus taught us to call Him in the Lord's Prayer. And He is

"of heaven," or, as we call Him in other words, "our heavenly Father," having his throne in heaven ("Our Father, which art in heaven"), though filling all places.

We call Christ the Redeemer of the world; you can easily find texts to prove this: 1 Tim. iv. 10.

We say that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. This refers to the mystery of the nature of the Trinity, so that we cannot understand its full meaning, but we will refer to two texts to show that God the Father sends Him, and that Jesus sends Him, John xiv. 26; xv. 26. Then there are two texts which speak of Him, one as the Spirit of God, Gen. i. 2; the other as the Spirit of the Son, Gal. iv. 6.

The fourth sentence joins the Three Holy Persons in One, under the title of the Holy Trinity—three in one.

Now, what is the prayer we offer to each and all of Them? That they would be merciful to us, "miserable sinners."

Do you *feel* those words? Many persons use them without really feeling them; some would even hesitate to say that the words were strictly true of them. But whether you think it true or not—whether you feel it or not, it *is true*. The Bible says it, Rom. iii. 23; and the more people know of themselves, the more deeply will they feel the truth, and use the language of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

You shall now read three texts on the mercy or goodness of each of the Three Holy Persons:—

God the Father has mercy on sinners, for see Heb. viii. 12.

God the Son has mercy on sinners, see Matt. xx. 28.

God the Spirit has mercy on sinners, see Rom. viii. 26.

Do you earnestly seek that mercy?

The fifth sentence, addressed to Christ, is a fuller prayer for the same mercy.

God must one day take vengeance on obstinate, unrepenting sinners, for otherwise He would not be a holy and a just God. See what He threatens by the mouth of the Apostle Paul, 2 Thess. i. 8; and that anger will be "for ever."

Well may we pray that neither the sins of our forefathers, nor our own, may be remembered. Sometimes children do suffer for the sins of their forefathers: see the second Commandment. God *loves* such a prayer, if offered through Christ, and He has promised to answer it. Read Jer. xxxi. 34; l. 20.

LESSON XXX.

The Litany, *continued*.

The first five sentences were general prayers for mercy and forgiveness. After these come five sentences, called the deprecation, in which we pray for deliverance from various evils, the minister describing those evils, and the congregation adding, "Good Lord, deliver us."

We will look at these five sentences one by one, for they speak of a great number of things of different sorts; "evil" that may happen to the body, the mind, or the soul—evils from wicked men, and from devils—and the wrath of God—evils that may befall each of us singly—and those that attack whole classes of people, or even nations.

The first of the five describes spiritual evils: sin, its author, and its punishment. We use the word mischief now of such things as a boy's breaking a window, or tearing a book *wilfully*; or of accidents, such as Jacob feared for Benjamin, Gen. xlii. 4. But the word is used in the Bible in a deeper sense; so Paul applied it to Elymas, when he sought to prevent the progress of the Gospel, Acts xiii. 10. It means also the attacks of wicked men, Ps. xxvi. 10; and the *punishment* of sin, Prov. xii. 21; xxiv. 16.

"The crafts and assaults of the devil." What is meant by crafts? Craft means cunning; so when the Jews sought to entrap our Saviour (Luke xx. 23), it is said, that "He perceived their craftiness." Assaults mean open attacks: read Acts xiv. 5; xvii. 5. Satan, then, tries to injure us in two ways—craftily and openly: craftily, by making sin appear pleasant and likely to make us happy. So, it is said, he "*beguiled*" Eve, Gen. iii. 13; 2 Cor. xi. 3. And in another text sin is called deceitful, Heb. iii. 13. He tries to injure us openly. So Daniel was tried; there was an open threat that, if he prayed, he would be thrown to the lions. So Paul knew that if he persisted in preaching the Gospel, he would lose his life. These were open temptations to sin.

Both these things, more or less, will happen to us. Sometimes Satan will try to deceive us, making sin appear less wrong than it really is; sometimes a strong temptation to open disobedience will beset us. Well may we pray, "Good Lord, deliver us."

The two next evils are, indeed, dreadful. The wrath of God, and everlasting damnation. Who can tell the full meaning of these words? Who can tell what it will be to die in the agony of unforgiven sin—to stand before the throne of an angry and offended Judge, and to hear Him say, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire"—?

The wrath of God falls on some men, however, before that last day. It fell on the whole world (save eight persons) at the deluge. It fell on Sodom and Gomorrha—on Jerusalem (more than once), on Babylon, Tyre, and Rome. It fell on Ahab, Jezebel, Pharaoh, Saul, Belshazzar, Judas, Ananias, and Sapphira, and many others. We will read some descriptions of the effects of that wrath in this life. See Deut. xxviii.; Job xviii.; xx.; Ps. xi.

Is there any description in the Bible of the wrath of God beyond the grave? There is very little, but that little is awful—"Everlasting destruction." 1 Thess. i. 9; "outer darkness," with "weeping and gnashing of teeth," Matt. viii. 12; "everlasting fire," Matt. xxv. 41; "the lake of fire," which is "the second death," Rev. xx. 9; xxi. 8; "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is never quenched," Mark ix. 44. These are dreadful thoughts; but, blessed be God, the way of escape is yet open. Jesus still invites you to come to Him and be saved, and those that so come will, indeed, have the fulfilment of the prayer we here put up, "Good Lord, deliver us."

LESSON XXXI.

THE LITANY, *continued*.

THE next verse speaks of those evils coming from within the heart. The heart of every one by nature is corrupt—all are born in sin, Psalm li. 5. And here is a sad list of such sins as man is thus prone to: "blindness of heart, pride, vain-

glory and hyprocrisy, envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness." There is a great difference in these—but all are sins, all hateful to God, all deserving the wages of sin, which is everlasting death, and therefore we pray, From all these, "Good Lord, deliver us."

What is *blindness of heart?* Imagine the misfortune of being blind—what a loss it is, and what a source of danger. So a blind heart loses numberless things, and runs great risks without being conscious of it. Why did David utter the prayer in Psalm cxix. 18? We may judge by looking also at Matt. xv. 14; xxiii. 16, 26; John ix. 39; Rom ii. 19; 2 Peter i. 9; Rev. iii. 17. A blind heart sees no beauty in Christ, no great danger in sin, no treasure in the Bible, no path to heaven such as the Word of God shows us. Satan blinds our eyes, 2 Cor. iv. 4. Nay, we are even told in the Bible that when sinners are obstinate in their impenitence, God Himself at last gives them up and blinds their eyes, John xii. 40. Well may we pray against such a dreadful punishment. Take care, then, that you do not bring it on yourselves, by *refusing to see*, when God now says, "*Look* unto me, and be ye saved."

Pride and vain-glory. You know what pride is; and vain-glory is very like it. To glory is to boast, and vain-glory is boasting without cause, as boasting almost surely is. These sins are very hateful to God; see such texts as Prov. vi. 17; viii. 13; xvi. 5; xxi. 4; Ps. xxxi. 23; cxxxviii. 6; Luke i. 51; James iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5. And they are fatal if indulged in, Prov. xv. 25; xvi. 18; Is. ii. 12; 1 Tim. iii. 6.

Hypocrisy, or pretending to be what we really are not. True, we cannot deceive God, but we can often deceive our fellow-creatures. Judas was a hypocrite, and it is dreadful to find him betraying the Son of Man with a kiss. You shudder at such hypocrisy—avoid the sin altogether, or rather join earnestly in the prayer, From such a sin "good Lord deliver us." See what the Bible says of hypocrites and their punishment, Matt. xxiii. 28; Mark xii. 15; 1 Tim. iv. 2 James iii. 17; Job viii. 13; xv. 34; xx. 5; xxxvi. 13; Matt. xxiv. 51.

Envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. These are sins against our fellow-creatures; but all sin against them is sin against God. If we envy another anything they possess—if we hate, or are even unkind in thought to our fellow-creatures—if we bear malice against them, that is, *retain* angry thoughts,—if we are uncharitable, judging them harshly, supposing evil of them without being certain, these are sins against man, but against God too; and for them God will punish us. Let us find a text or two on each. Envy, Prov. xxvii. 4; Acts vii. 9; xvii. 3; 1 Tim. vi. 40. Hatred, Gal. v. 20; 1 John ii. 9; iii. 15. Malice, 1 Cor. v. 8; Ephes. iv. 31; Rom. i. 29; Col. iii. 8. Uncharitableness, Matt. vii. 1, 2. Daniel's enemies envied him, Ahab hated good Micaiah, Joab bore malice against Abner, Job's friends were uncharitable to him.

Next we have a different class of sins, "fornication, and deadly sin, and the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil."

The Seventh Commandment, as interpreted by our Saviour, Matt. v. 27, 28, forbids all impurity, both in thought and word, as well as in deed. This is indeed a deadly, or fatal sin. All sin is deadly in one sense—its wages is death. But deadly sin here means those that are especially destructive, ruining the soul most rapidly and most thoroughly. Sins differ in their nature, and in their immediate consequences. A lie is a sin, and God will punish it; but a murder is in some respects a more fatal sin; it is certainly more dreadful and more injurious to our fellow creatures.

The sins forbidden in the seventh commandment are particularly injurious

both to the offender and to society. Witness the case of David. See also the punishments denounced in Malachi iii. 5; 1 Cor. vi 9; Heb. xiii. 4.

"*The deceits of the world.*" What are these? The world is often used in the Bible to signify the people who live only for this world, careless about God, and the world to come. It also means the principles on which such people act—the rules by which they live. Also, all the pomp and glory of the world—riches, fame, pleasure. We will read a few texts about "the world," John vii. 7; xiv. 17, 22; xv. 18; xvii. 9, 14; 1 Cor. xi. 32; James i. 27; iv. 4; 1 John ii. 15; iii. 1; iv. 5; v. 4, 19.

How does the world deceive? Pleasure often deceives. Sabbath-breakers, for instance, expect a day of pleasure, and for a while may have it; but in the long run, the pleasure is a deceit, whilst the sin is a certainty. Riches promise happiness, but often fail to fulfil the promise; or the possessor, like the man in Luke xii. 20, loses his anticipated enjoyment in a moment. Ambition deceives. Men grasp at greatness, like Absalom grasping at David's crown; they seem to have gained their wish, but find that it proves a curse instead of a blessing. We pray, then, that *we* may not be so deceived, but may *see through* the false pretences of the world, and seek our happiness elsewhere, in better and more enduring things.

"*The deceits of the flesh.*" The flesh, in Scripture language, often means the body as distinct from the soul. See Matt. xxvi. 41. The body has its pleasures—eating, drinking, exercise, rest; all in turn are pleasures, all are necessary, but all may be abused. Gluttons, and drunkards, and sluggards, think to find a pleasure in indulging themselves, but it is a false, deceitful pleasure, ending in ruin both of body and soul. See Prov. xxiii. 21; xiii. 4; xx. 4; 1 Cor. vi. 10.

"*The deceits of the devil.*" We have spoken of these before, under the title of the crafts of the devil. They are mentioned again here to remind us that we have three enemies to strive against; such enemies that we cannot resist them in our own strength. Therefore let us ever, in holy fear, put up this prayer, "Good Lord, deliver us."

LESSON XXXII.

The Litany, *continued.*

We have been speaking hitherto of spiritual evils—now we come to a different class, bodily or temporal evils:

1.—Lightning, Tempest, Plague, Pestilence, and Famine.

2.—Battle, Murder, and Sudden Death.

3.—Sedition, Privy Conspiracy, and Rebellion.

The first five, which I will put altogether, are the direct acts of God—the others are brought about by men. From all these, we pray that God would deliver us.

1st.—Then as to those which I said were the direct acts of God. We need only turn to the Bible to find instances of all these being inflicted by God as punishments;—for remember, that only as punishments does God send them. He takes no pleasure in affliction, Ezek. xviii. 23. If men would leave off sinning, God would leave off punishing. In heaven there will be no sin, and there will be no sorrow, nor pain, nor tears.

We shall find instances of God's sending lightning and tempest as punishments in Exodus ix. 22—25: Jonah i. 4—11. The deluge was a vast tempest. See also 2 Sam. xxii. 15; Ps. xi. 6; lxxviii. 18; Is. xxx. 30. But with regard to these, we must recollect that they are also *useful*. The heated air of summer-time *needs* every now and then to be cooled and purified by the thunder-storm, or it would become injurious to life. We do not, therefore, pray that there may be no lightning or tempest, but that they may not fall on us and strike us dead. Such things do happen—but how awful! See Numbers xvi. 15.

Instances of the plague and the pestilence as inflicted for punishment are numerous. See Numbers xvi. 46—49; xi. 33; xiv. 37: 1 Sam. vi.; 2 Samuel xxiv.; Exodus ix.; Jerem. xiv. 12; xxi. 6, 9. The history of the Great Plague of London is an awful account of agony and death. If you will read it for yourselves, you will then pray this prayer with redoubled earnestness.

Famine, too, is one of God's scourges—one of his four sore judgments, Ezek. xiv. 13—21. A word of his can make the earth barren and the harvest light. See Lev. xxvi. 26; Ps. cv. 16; Ezek. iv. 16: v. 16. See instances, Gen. xli.; xvii.; xliii.; 2 Sam. xxi.; 1 Kings xviii.; 2 Kings vii.; viii.; xxv.; Jerem. xxi.; xxxii.; Lam. v. 10. Happy is it for you that you know nothing of such horrors except from reading of them as endured by others. From plague, from pestilence, from famine, God *has* hitherto delivered you—are you grateful?

After these evils come those which are inflicted by man on his fellow-creatures—battle and murder.

We are apt to think the latter the most dreadful, but that arises from our being ignorant of what a battle is; and if we could walk over a battle-field when the fighting was over, and see the sights, and hear the sounds of that dreadful scene, we should ever afterwards shudder at the very thought of a battle. Remember the battle in which Absalom perished—or the one in 2 Chron. xxviii. It is right and necessary at some times to defend our country and our families, but war is always a great curse—another of God's sore judgments—and we may well pray to be delivered from it. So we pray—"Give peace in our times, O Lord, we beseech Thee."

Murder!—we start at the word. We read of Abel murdered by his own brother—Abner by Joab, 2 Sam. iii.—Amnon by Absalom, 2 Sam. xiii.—John the Baptist, by Herod (for to command a murder is to commit a murder)—and others; and we feel it to be a dreadful thing to lose one's life in a moment, and that, not by accident, but by a fellow-creature's hand. From murder, then, may God deliver us. Also from all sudden death—all death that seizes people unexpectedly, stops their breath, and summons them before their Judge.

Do not forget that you may die in a moment—perhaps, like the rich fool, the word has gone forth "*this night*." Are you ready? Are you at peace with God through Christ? If so, you need not fear to die suddenly, though you might choose rather to die peacefully amongst your friends, soothed to the last by their love and kindness.

Now, then, for the last evils spoken of. Sedition, *i.e.*, raising a disturbance against the government—privy (or private) conspiracy, *i.e.*, plotting together to change the government—and rebellion, the open and avowed effort to do so, are all well illustrated in Absalom's history (2 Sam. xv.) It was sedition when he made the people discontented—conspiracy when he called his friends together to make him king instead of David—and rebellion when he and his men marched openly upon Jerusalem to kill, or at least dethrone David.

That history shows what misery is the result—and, therefore, we may well beseech God to save our beloved country from such curses, and to make all men peaceful and contented.

LESSON XXXIII.

THE LITANY, *continued.*

AFTER the temporal evils just spoken of, we come to some more spiritual evils in two classes:

1st.—False Doctrine, Heresy, and Schism.

2nd.—Hardness of heart, and Contempt of God's Word and Will.

Let us see what these are, as displayed by Bible illustrations, and in characters described in the Bible.

False doctrine, or holding false opinions—opinions contrary to truth—is no new thing. Soon after our Saviour's time, when Christianity began to spread far over the world, Satan began to deceive and mislead the followers of Christ (he is called the deceiver: see also Rev. xx. 3—10; xii. 9; he beguiled, or deceived Eve, 2 Cor. xi. 3), that he might spoil what he could not prevent. See the predictions and warnings against such deceitful arts, whether from men or Satan, Matt. xxiv. 4, 5, 24; Ephes. iv. 14; v. 6; 2 Thess. ii. 3; 2 Tim. iii. 13.

It was not long before the evil began, and false doctrines spread, corrupting Christianity. See 2 John vii.; Gal. i. 6—9. Some said that the Jewish ceremonial law was still binding, Gal. iii. 1; iv. 9, 10. Others that the Resurrection was past, 2 Tim. ii. 18, or would not come at all, 1 Cor. xv. 12. Others denied Christ, 2 Pet. ii. 1; 1 John ii. 22. Others denied the necessity of holiness, Jude 4—8.

All these false doctrines may also be called heresies, but heresy is a stronger term than false doctrine, and implies that the offender has forsaken the right path.

Schism means literally cutting off, or separation—that is, separation from the Truth and from the Church of God. The first step in the evil is to hold false opinions *with* true ones—then the false ones gain strength and are put forth prominently; then the man leaves the Church entirely, or endeavours to divide it, and becomes a schismatic.

There was schism in the time of Moses, when Korah endeavoured to set himself up as a rival priest to Aaron. See the history of the sin and its dreadful punishment, in Numbers xvi. And those who, in Paul's time, contended for the continuance of circumcision as necessary to salvation, made a schism in the Church. See Gal. i.; ii.; iii. Some also made parties in the Church, a step almost certain to lead to schism. See 1 Cor. i. 11—13.

There are false doctrines and heresies now, and schism too. The Socinians deny the divinity of our Lord. Roman Catholics hold that saints and angels should be worshipped, and believe that purgatory is needed in addition to the blood of Christ, to take away sin, besides other false doctrines. Dissenters make parties, and cause divisions among us to enable them the better to follow their own notions or views of doctrine, and thus cause strife and contention.

How are we to be kept from such errors? Not by our own wisdom, for many wise and talented men have been turned aside and deceived, and have taken up false doctrines. No! if we would be safe, we must be humble, not leaning to

our own understanding, nor glorying in our own wisdom, Prov. iii. 5: Jerem. ix. 23; but often using the prayer in the Collect for Trinity Sunday, that God would keep us steadfast in this faith; and the prayer taught us here, that from all such evils, He would deliver us.

Then come other evils, against which we all have need to pray—a hard heart, and a contemptuous spirit.

The latter sounds so dreadful that we almost shrink from applying the prayer to ourselves. What! despise God's Word? But to disregard it, is to despise it. He calls us with many gracious words, and if we will not hear, it shows that (though we might shrink from acknowledging it) we do not care about Him and his Word so much as we do about earthly or even sinful pleasures. See Lev. xx. 15; Mal. i. 6; Luke x. 16; Acts xiii. 41; Rom. ii. 4; 1 Thess. iv. 8; 2 Tim. iii 3. A hard heart! All are so by nature. Sin hardens them, Zech. vii. 12; Heb. iii. 13; but grace can soften them. See the precious promise in Ezek. xi. 19; it is the work of the Spirit of God.

Has that blessed change taken place in you? Can you *feel* God's love to you?

LESSON XXXIV.

The Litany, *continued.*

We have hitherto been pleading for deliverance from certain dangers and evils. Now, in the intercessory portion of the Litany which follows, we go on to speak of the **means** by which we hope that that deliverance will be given us, and you will see that all rests on Christ. It is to Him we address the words, "Good Lord, deliver us;" and we now ask Him to deliver us by making each act of his life and death, every separate portion of his humiliation and sufferings, avail for our deliverance, or salvation; for it is salvation we here mean (eternal "safety.")

Christ did much more than die for us; for each thing mentioned here was needed.

"Thy holy incarnation," *i.e.*, becoming flesh, Heb. ii. 14; man, but yet perfectly holy, Luke i. 35. It is called a mystery, which means a thing so wonderful as to be long hidden, or misunderstood; but at length revealed. This was such; many of the Old Testament saints looked forward to it; but we find the bulk of the Jews unwilling to believe that Christ could be both God and man. What has Christ's incarnation to do with our salvation? Everything! If He were not man, how could He die? If He did not die, how could the penalty of sin be borne by Him? That penalty is death, Ezek. xviii. 4; Rom. vi. 23. *Therefore* Christ became incarnate, Heb. ii. 14—17.

"Thy holy nativity and circumcision." The nativity, or birth of Christ of a human mother, proved that it was indeed our flesh and blood of which He became partaker; see also Luke xxiv. 39; John xx. 27. Circumcision was the outward sign (as baptism is now), of admission into the Church. Christ submitted to it, and kept (fulfilled) the law, Matt. v. 17.

"Thy baptism." See it described in Matt. iii. 13—15; where Jesus Himself gave his reason for submitting to it, *viz.*, to fulfil all righteousness. Thus, He was an example to us of perfect obedience; and that perfect obedience is part of our salvation.

"Thy fasting and temptation," Matt. iv. What had they to do with our salvation? They showed who and what Christ was—Divine, Sinless, yet Human,

(in that He afterwards hungered) able to resist all temptations—indeed the Conqueror, able therefore to make us also conquerors, Rom. viii. 37; and so delivering or saving us; see Rom. xvi. 20.

"Thine agony and bloody sweat." See Luke xxii. 40—45. Was it bodily pain that caused this dreadful agony? No; for it took place before one blow had been inflicted. It was the sense of God's anger against sinners; for He had put Himself in the place of us sinners to bear the anger of God. So in Isaiah liii., and 2 Cor. v. 21. And therefore again He cried aloud on the cross, Matt. xxvii. 46. He bore the curse for us, or the weight of it would have sunk us into hell.

"Thy cross and passion" (*i.e.*, suffering). This is part of the same. Christ did suffer, and did die, and only *thus* could we escape like suffering and eternal death.

"Thy precious death and burial." Matt. xxvii. 57—60. These were clear signs that He was truly dead; and we have seen that on his death depended all our hopes.

"Thy glorious resurrection and ascension." Luke xxiv. What did these prove? That the atonement was sufficient, and was accepted: the punishment was completed—salvation finished for all believers; see the verse in the *Te Deum*, "When thou hadst overcome," &c.

"The coming of the Holy Ghost." Acts ii. Christ gave that glorious gift, John xv. 26. He is the great Teacher (John xvi. 13) and Sanctifier of the Church of God, and so saves them.

It is a solemn question whether we shall reap the blessed results of all these. There are some to whom all will have been in vain, just because they *will* not come.

[These petitions may be understood in another sense; the words running thus, "We beseech Thee by Thine agony, &c., Good Lord, deliver us." Thus we put Him in remembrance of what He has already done for us, as a plea for yet more. ED.]

LESSON XXXV.

THE LITANY, *continued*.

HAVING in the preceding petition sought to apply the merits of Christ's whole wondrous scheme of redemption to our souls, we sum up our petitions for ourselves by referring to four conditions of life, or periods of our existence, when especially we need to put up the prayer "Good Lord, deliver us."

The first of these is, "All time of our tribulation;" all time when we fall into trouble. There are many sources of trouble, such as sickness, loss of money, loss of situations, loss of friends by death. There are troubles within, such as each person alone can fully feel (Prov. xiv. 10); we suffer for the sins of others, we suffer for our own. There is the feeling of our own guilt—of our own weakness—of the power of temptation.

May we go to God in all such cares and troubles? Certainly; see such verses as Matt. x. 29—31; 1 Pet. v. 7. God made and cares for the meanest and least insect; He will surely care for us. And how? not always by removing the trouble, but by helping us to bear it. He can soothe the pains of sickness (Ps. xli. 3). He can provide for all earthly wants, and make up for all earthly losses

(1 Tim. vi. 6). He can comfort us under the sad trouble of losing our friends (1 Thess. iv. 13, 14). Then, too, He can heal our consciences, taking away the sense of guilt, and giving us the blessed assurance that our sins are forgiven; read Gal. iv. 5, 6; Rom. viii. 16. Next:—"In all time of our wealth." Deliver us *then*, from what? What are the dangers of a time of wealth? One is the love of money, which often grows as the money grows. That love is a curse; see 1 Tim. vi. 10. Another is, trusting in our money for happiness; and this is sure to end in disappointment, as Solomon, the rich king of Israel, found out, Eccles. ii. 1—11. Another is, forgetfulness of God; such was the sin of the rich man spoken of in Luke xii. 16, 17; and of the other in Luke xvi. 19—22. If then we ever grow rich, let us not forget this prayer; but notice that it is not a prayer against *riches*, but against the *abuse* of riches; for money becomes a great blessing when used as God would have us use it.

"In the hour of death." Of this I need say but little. Think of the solemn feeling when one is about to leave all that now we see or hear—to close our eyes on the world, and open them in eternity! The hour of death is a solemn hour. When will yours be? You know not; it may be to-night! Can you hope that this prayer would be heard, and God be with you in the hour of death? David had that hope, and felt no fear of death. See Psalm xxiii. 4.

"In the Day of Judgment." What do we know of that day? We know who the Judge will be—we know who will be judged, for not one can escape—we know that the secrets of all hearts will then be revealed, Rom. ii. 16—we know what the issue must be: heaven for God's redeemed ones through Christ; hell for the lost and impenitent. Ah, that will be a day of wonders: we shall know the reality of things, which now we can only believe by faith. God will judge each one. And it will then be too late to lift up this prayer, if you have never done it before. Now is the accepted time—now is the day of salvation.

LESSON XXXVI.

The Litany, *continued*.

After these petitions for ourselves, we proceed to the duty enjoined by St. Paul (1 Tim. ii. 1) of making intercession for all men; and in the general supplications which follow, all degrees of persons are mentioned in their place.

First comes a prayer for the Church universal—that is for the people of God in every place and country. Wherever there are people who love and serve God, and look for salvation through Christ, and are sanctified by the Holy Spirit, there is a part of the holy universal Church. For that Church we pray that God would rule it and govern it; this He can do by his Holy Spirit directing, teaching, and sanctifying all the members of that Church. Thus He preserves them from their spiritual enemies (as promised Matt. xvi. 18), and in His own good time leads them by the "right way" to his heavenly mansions.

Then follow some prayers for particular persons, and first for our Queen and the members of her family.

Why should we pray for them?

It is God's provideuce which has set them over us; that is one reason, for the Scripture teaches us to honour and obey such: read Rom. xiii. 1—7; 1 Pet. ii. 13 Therefore, the Catechism tells you that part of your duty to your neighbour is to "honour and obey the Queen, and all that are put in authority under her."

And how can we better show her honour and attachment than by praying for her? You may think you can do nothing for her, and have nothing to give her. It is not so. The sincere prayer of the youngest child is of more real value than the noblest present you could make her.

What do you call her? The servant of God, and our most gracious Queen and governor. All kings and queens are God's servants, for they do His work, and at least owe Him service. But they do not all feel and acknowledge this. It is no little joy to us to have the hope that our good Queen does so, and that she is in the habit of looking to God for wisdom and guidance in her very important duties.

"Most gracious" is a title, meaning most kind and favourable, which is really true of Victoria our Queen.

Now, what do we ask for her? That God would keep her in the true worship of Himself—in righteousness and true holiness—would rule her heart and make her to believe in Him, to fear Him, to love Him—would enable her evermore (as long as she lives) to "have affiance" in Him, *i.e.*, to trust in Him and *lean on* Him, and to seek His honour and glory—would be her Defender and Keeper, and would give her the victory over all her enemies.

You see these are partly spiritual, and partly temporal blessings, and we (properly) take the spiritual ones first. The welfare of the soul is of far more consequence than the welfare of the body: the latter soon perishes, the former will live on for ever.

Kings and queens have peculiar trials and temptations. We are too apt to look on their lives as one scene of enjoyment and indulgence. This is not true! They have often hard work, great disappointments—hard trials—(alas! how great is the heart sorrow which the death of her beloved Consort has proved to our Queen!)—and often the temptation to trust in their affluence ("in all times of our wealth, Good Lord deliver us")—so that they especially need our prayers.

Then how much our happiness is bound up with their wisdom and goodness! Not so much so, it is true, as under despotic monarchies, like the Eastern ones, where the word of the king is law (as Ahasuerus could condemn all the Jews to be murdered, and Jezebel could murder Naboth, Herod the infants at Bethlehem, &c.), but still their influence and example are sure to go far. See Prov. xxviii. 15; xxix. 12.

Then we pray for the Royal Family—for Albert Edward, Prince of Wales (the Queen's eldest son, who is the heir of the throne), and all her other children.

The feeling of attachment to our country is called Patriotism—that of attachment to the Queen is called Loyalty. Both are right and proper, provided always that the first does not lead us to be unjust and uncharitable to people of other countries—and the latter does not interfere with our first duty to God. For see Acts v. 29. Happy is it for us that we live under a queen and under laws which do not require us to do what God forbids!

LESSON XXXVII.

THE LITANY *continued*.

HAVING first prayed for our Sovereign, we next pray for all those who are put in authority under her,—the nobility, the administrators of the laws of the land, and the teachers and rulers of the Church of our nation.

1st, we pray for the Clergy. 2nd, for the Nobility, and 3rd, for the Magistracy.

We will read them each as we come to them; and, first, that for the Clergy, of whom, in our Church, there are three orders—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.

A Bishop means an overseer or overlooker; and we find the word either in the Greek, or in our own translation, in the following passages,—Acts xx. 28; Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2; Titus i. 7. Timothy was the first Bishop of Ephesus, and Titus in the island of Crete, 2 Tim. ii. 2; Titus i. 5. Our Bishops ordain Ministers, and administer the rite of confirmation. The word Priest means Elder or Presbyter—contracted to Priest. The word "elder" occurs frequently, both in the Old and New Testaments. Let us read Gen. l. 7; Ex. iii. 16; xxiv. 1; Numb. xi. 16, 17; 2 Sam. v. 3; Ezek. xiv. 1; xx. 1. They were not then the same as the priests, but they possessed civil power, joined, however, with some portion of religious authority. They were coupled with the priests and the rulers in the Gospels: let us read Matt. xxvi. 59; xxvii. 20; Luke xxii. 52; see, also, Acts iv. 5; xxiv. 1; xxv. 15.

But in the Christian Church, where the Ministers do not, by virtue of their office, claim any temporal power (except the Bishops, who are part of the parliament), the Elders, or Presbyters, were, and are, religious teachers ordained for that work of the ministry alone. St. Peter calls himself an Elder (1 Pet. v. 1); but we see in Acts xv. 6, that though the apostles were elders, the elders were not all apostles; they were distinct orders.

The Deacons were another order (see Acts vi.), and they attended to the distribution of alms, &c. But both Philip and Stephen preached, and Philip baptized; so the Deacon's office was a religious one, though, in some points inferior to the Presbyter's. The Church of England, then, has Scripture authority for her three orders of Ministers.

Now notice what we ask God to do for them all—To illuminate or enlighten them with true knowledge of his Word. David compares the Bible to a lamp; and thus we mean that these, our Ministers, need (as we do) the light of truth to guide them, and they especially, as having to teach others. Also we pray that, having such knowledge, they may exhibit it in their preaching and in their living; that they may preach the Gospel, and may live so as to adorn it. When a man really has that light, it becomes his light, and he shines before men, as Christ bids him (Matt. v. 16). It is doubly important that Ministers should do this as examples (1 Pet. v. 1—3).

2nd.—We pray for all the nobility and the Queen's councillors. Ours is a limited monarchy—*i. e.*, the law is greater than the Queen, and Parliament helps to make laws; so we may well pray that all the Queen's advisers may be endued with grace and wisdom. Such was Solomon's prayer for himself 1 Kings iii. 7—9).

3rd.—We pray for the magistrates—the men who do not make laws, but who see that the laws are put in force. How important it is that they should do justice between all men—not taking bribes, as Samuel's sons did (1 Sam. viii. 1—3), nor deciding falsely, but always maintaining the truth, without fear or favour.

If God will bless and keep them, they will do this. Let us read what St. Paul says of our duty to magistrates. It is a double duty: 1st, obedience; 2nd, prayer for them. See this in Rom. xiii. 1—7; and 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

LESSON XXXVIII.

THE LITANY, *continued.*

WE now come to some more general prayers or petitions, which we cannot class together, but must take one by one.

There is a prayer that God would bless and keep all his people.

In one sense God is good to all—his tender mercies are over all his works: see Ps. cxlv. 9; Matt. v. 45; Acts xvii. 25. And in one sense all people are his, for He made and sustains them. But God has choicer blessing for those who are his people; in a still higher sense, trying to serve Him; and for such blessings we here pray, feeling that safety and blessings are alike his gifts. Remember his gracious promises, Ps. xxix. 11; xci. 11.

Then we pray for all nations, and seek the precious gifts of "unity, peace, and concord," *i. e.*, agreement. How earnestly we ought now to pour out this prayer, when war is causing, in another country, so much bloodshed and misery! We little know what war really is, although in England we have had to pay high prices and heavy taxes in consequence, but its real horrors are only known to those who witness them on the battle field, and those who suffer from its ravages.

What causes war? Sometimes ambition; sometimes it is revenge, sometimes hatred, sometimes pride.

Will war ever cease? Will men ever learn to live in unity and concord? Oh yes, there are glorious promises of this. Let us read some, Is. ii. 2—4; xi. 9; Micah iv. 3—5; Ps. xlvi. 9; lxxii. 7. For this happy time we also pray in the words "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

Then do you try to be peacemakers wherever you can, and do not give way to angry thoughts or jealousies against strangers; there are many good people in many nations—and, at least, we should be kind and courteous to all men: see Rom. xii. 18.

Next there is a prayer for ourselves—that God would give us an heart to do three things—To love Him, to dread or fear Him, and to obey Him diligently.

All these are necessary to salvation. What if we do not love God? Alas! the heart that does not cannot please God, cannot desire his presence, and cannot enter heaven, 1 John iv. 8.

What if we do not fear Him? That fear is the very beginning of wisdom. See Job. xxviii. 28; Ps. cxi. 10; cxii. 1; Prov. xiii. 13; xiv. 26, 27; xxviii. 14; 2 Cor. vii. 1.

God is very good and merciful—so we may well love Him; but He is also very great and glorious—so we may well fear Him. See his own words in Malachi i. 14.

What if we do not obey Him? How then can we expect Him to bless us? Surely we ought to do so, diligently, after the example of our Redeemer, who said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God!"

For all this God must give us grace. He calls on us and intreats us to love and fear and obey Him. See what He said of Israel in Deut. v. 29; and so He pleads now with you,—and if you heartily desire it, He *will* give you that new heart; for see Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 25, 26; Jer. xxiv. 7.

Do you then really desire these blessings?

LESSON XXXIX.

THE LITANY, *continued.*

NEXT come three prayers for the spiritual welfare of several classes of people. Read them, and you will see that the people prayed for are—

1st.—All God's people.

2nd.—Those that have erred (*i. e.*, wandered out of the way of obedience), and are deceived. See Isaiah xliv. 20; liii. 6; Heb. iii. 13.

3rd.—Those that stand; which means, of course, spiritual standing or holiness, as contrasted with sin, which is called falling.

4th.—The weak hearted; people that have little hope and great fear, and fee almost discouraged at the thought of their own weakness, and the power of their enemies. David gave way to this when he wrote the lxxvii. Psalm; and see Isaiah xl. 27.

5th.—Those that fall, that is, those true children *of* God who give way to temptation, as David did, and Peter.

What do we ask for on behalf of all God's people? Increase of grace. It never does to think we have enough: see the fearful warning in Rev. iii. 17—20. Then that they may hear God's word meekly, *i. e.*, with reverence, and with pure affection, *i. e.*, true deep love, such as made David say, it was better than thousands of gold and silver. We are not to judge the Bible—the Bible judges us. If we receive it with that meekness and love, we shall bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, those graces described in Gal. v.

Then for the wanderers we pray that God would bring them back. See the gracious promise in Ezek. xxxiv. 12 and 16; also Luke v. 32. If God has brought *us* back (for *all* we, like sheep, have gone astray) we shall surely pray that others too may be recovered.

For those that stand—consistent pious people—we still pray that God would strengthen them—a beautiful remembrance that it is only by His strength they do stand, and that they need continually fresh supplies of his strength. See the warnings in 1 Cor. x. 12, and the promise in Isaiah xli. 10.

For the weak-hearted, we pray that God would comfort and help them. He delights to do so: see 2 Cor. vii. 6. If God gives us joyful happy hearts, let us still feel for the sorrowful, and pray for them.

For those that fall, we pray that God would raise them up. You know how God forgave and raised up the two good men I have spoken of as amongst those that have fallen—David and Peter—and the gracious message sent to each. We are too apt to be harsh and unmerciful to those that fall: let us learn a better spirit from the prayer our Church teaches us, and the words of St. Paul in 2 Cor. ii. 7. Let us hate the sin, but pity, pray for, and strive to raise up the Christian who has fallen into it.

Lastly, comes a prayer for victory over our great enemy—the devil, our tempter. If you know your own hearts, you will have felt the need of this prayer. Only by God's grace can you overcome—so weak are you, so strong is the enemy. But fear not! Remember what the prophet felt, Micah vii. 8. Remember St. Paul's triumphant words, Rom. viii. 37; xvi. 20: and when tempted remember this prayer. You are not told that *now* you shall be set free from all temptations—no, but you shall be strengthened now, and be finally triumphant.

LESSON XL.

The Litany *Continued.*

The last few prayers have been for spiritual blessings, now we come to petitions for temporal mercies suited to the peculiar wants or circumstances of men in the various conditions in which they are placed.

First we speak of those who "are in danger, necessity, and tribulation." Danger has a wide meaning. Paul was in danger in the tempest, and when bitten by the viper. Peter was in danger when in prison, bound between two soldiers. David was in danger when the lion and the bear attacked him—when he stood up to fight Goliath, and when Saul and his men surrounded the mountain where he was hiding. Jeremiah was in danger when Jehoiakim sought for him; Elijah when Jezebel threatened him, and Jonah in the fish's belly. You may live quiet lives, free from such danger, but remember the many who must be exposed to them. Think of soldiers, sailors, miners, builders, and others, and pray that God may keep them.

"Those in necessity," in sore want, like Job, stripped of everything—like the widow of Sarepta, with only a handful of meal left—like Ishmael dying for want of water. Thousands like them are to be found even in this prosperous country—thousands in Eastern lands perish by frequent drought and famine; whole caravans perish in the desert from thirst. Remember them, and pray for them. God can succour them.

"Those in tribulation," like Martha and Mary at the grave of Lazarus; like the disciples mourning over imprisoned Peter. There are thousands of aching hearts, every moment we live, thousands whose grief no human hand can relieve. But see the cheering title given to God in 2 Cor. i. 4; vii. 6. Look back upon the troubles I have mentioned, and think how often the hand of God was put forth to save his people. Compare also Ps. cvii., and remember the glorious promise for the future, Rev. vii. 15—17; xxi. 4.

"All that travel." Our forefathers thought much more than we do of the danger of travelling. In those days a man who was going from London to York made his will, as though he saw great danger of death in such a long journey. Now we step into a railway carriage, and get down in a few hours; or go on board a steamer, and in fourteen days reach America; or in a month arrive in India. Yet there are dangers in travelling—an engine may run off the line—a ship may strike on a rock, and death comes in an instant. Though we need not therefore be timid about travelling, yet we should never fail to ask God to preserve us, and all that travel.

"All sick persons." The strong and hearty forget what it is to lie down on a bed of sickness, to lose the power of running, walking, working; to feel pain and disease; or to look death in the face. But see Job. vii. 3—6, and Hezekiah's complaint, in Is. xxxviii. 9—14. Pity the sick, sympathise with them, try to comfort them (compare Matt. xxv. 36), but, above all, pray for them.

"Young children." Do you wonder at this prayer? If so, remember what helpless things little children are, and what constant care they need. God does not look on them as beneath his notice. Jesus laid his hand on such to bless them.

"Prisoners and captives." Some are such innocently, like Peter, Paul, John the Baptist, and John the Evangelist (Rev. i. 9), others for their crimes, like Barabbas. The former we may well pray for, that they may be delivered, and

their innocence declared. But surely the others need praying for—that God would give them a broken and contrite heart. A prison is a sad place for reflection, but many a poor sinner has found it a blessed thing to be so afflicted.

"The fatherless children and widows:" how sad their condition! But God has especial promises for them, see Ps. x. 14; Jer. xlix. 11; Ps. lxviii. 5. "The desolate" or friendless. God is the best and truest Friend of such. See, for instance, Ps. xxvii. 10.

"The oppressed," those that are tyrannised over by others. We know little of this in England, but there is much of it in other countries still. Remember such instances as Naboth, and Paul, and Silas. Pity such as are thus oppressed, or the Negro slaves, torn from their homes and people to serve taskmasters.

"All men." This is a noble prayer. It is in the spirit of 1 Tim. ii. 1, and it teaches us to look on none as utter strangers, or be careless about their welfare. Whomsoever you meet, remember you have been taught to pray for him, and remember, too, that *all* men *may* be saved. 1 Tim. iv. 10.

Plans and Intelligence.

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

VI.

I HAVE read with much interest the sketches of "Our Sunday Schools," which have recently appeared in this Magazine, and I venture to add another to the series, in the hope that some of my fellow-labourers may find a similar interest in its perusal. Our duties as Superintendents and Teachers are too absorbing to permit of much time for personally acquainting ourselves with the practical working of other schools, and even if it were otherwise opportunities for doing so would necessarily be limited. These records, therefore, of the experiences in various Sunday schools, may not only be interesting but eminently useful. The grateful joy of those who have felt and witnessed the Spirit of God prospering the work of their hands, will be deepened by the knowledge that their Heavenly Father has in like manner dealt with others; and those who may seem to have been labouring in vain, who have not been permitted to see the fruit of their labours, may be cheered and comforted by the knowledge that in their supplications for increase of faith and zeal they are not alone, that their prayers often ascend to their Father's throne, and the present position of many of our schools is the answer to them.

Our Sunday school is situate in a densely populated suburb of London. The neighbourhood may be called a poor one, but the

general condition of its inhabitants is far removed from the poverty and destitution prevalent in the more eastern suburbs, the better class consisting of respectable tradesmen, shopkeepers, and city employés, and the lower of mechanics, artizans, and others of the industrious poor. Each of these classes is represented by our scholars, and our school possesses those advantages which, subject to judicious classification, frequently result from the bringing together, for the purpose of religious instruction, of children of different stations in life.

In writing this brief account of our school, I am compelled to confine myself to the boys' school, that for the girls, though held in the same building, being as separate and distinct as if it were held at the other extremity of London. This may cause some surprise to those who are experienced in Sunday school management, and is a matter of deep regret to many of us, but it is in accordance with the wishes of our Incumbent, whose long experience and earnest devotion to his pastoral duties give his opinions great weight, and entitle them to every respect. I must, therefore, dismiss the girls' school by saying, that the average attendance is about 300, and if one of the teachers would kindly write an account of it, it would, I have no doubt, be well worthy of insertion in the pages of the Quarterly.

About twelve years ago, my connection with this school commenced. It then consisted of about 100 boys taught by four voluntary teachers, and two or three pupil teachers belonging to the day school. The attendance which might otherwise have been considered fair was unsatisfactory, having regard to the population of the district, and the number of children attending the neighbouring schools. Of classification and organization we had none, the boys being placed under the care of their respective teachers, with very little regard to their proficiency, character, or disposition, the only plan or shadow of plan observed, being based upon the arrangements of the day school, and wholly inapplicable to those scholars who attended other day schools, or who did not attend school at all. There were no teachers' meetings either for business, improvement, or devotion, the teachers rarely seeing each other except on Sunday; there were no appointed lessons for the various classes, or any systematized course of instruction, each teacher teaching how and what he pleased; there were no class books used, nor any record kept of the individual attendance and conduct of the scholars; books were given to the scholars half yearly upon the old ticket system, and others were given by the teachers according to their discretion, or want of discretion, some giving them profusely and others not at all. It may be thought under circumstances such

as these our school could effect but little good. This, however, was hardly so. Amongst our teachers, few though they were, were men of earnest piety. One especially, now a minister of the Church, exercised an influence for good which is felt even yet. But a short time ago, I came across two young men who were formerly scholars in his class, and to whom his teaching had been abundantly blessed. Whether these were exceptional cases or not we cannot tell, that can only be known when the Son of Man shall come to gather up his jewels; but it may safely be asserted that as our religion is essentially one of harmony and order, a disorderly and badly regulated school is but ill calculated for the successful teaching of its truths.

In the year 1852, the unsatisfactory condition of our school, and the prospect of losing two of our teachers, determined us to hold occasional meetings. These meetings were productive of great good. Steps were taken to obtain fresh teachers, which were so far successful, that in the course of a few months four new ones were added to our ranks, two of whom were men of some experience in Sunday school work. Plans were discussed and agreed upon for the better classification of the scholars, and for remedying some of the defects which existed. Viewing these plans by the light of subsequent experience many of them were defective and incomplete, and have since been modified or superseded by fresh ones; but still they were in the right direction, as was fully shown by the increase in the attendance of the scholars, and the improvement in the general condition of the school which followed their adoption. The mention of a great privilege in connection with these meetings ought not to be omitted. The devotional exercises which preceded and closed them, afforded an opportunity never possessed by us before, of offering our united prayers for God's blessing upon our labours, and for seeking that spirit of humble reliance upon His aid which, after all, is the great foundation of the teacher's efficiency and success.

When the idea of writing this paper first suggested itself to me, I thought of giving an account of our progress year by year, showing the various alterations and improvements which from time to time were introduced, and tracing as far as possible their effect, as developed in the state and practical working of the school. On looking through our Minute books, however, I find a difficulty in fixing a date to some of our present arrangements, many of them being modifications or extensions of previously existing ones. Besides, such an account would have nothing very novel to recommend it. It would be an old story known and experienced by every one who has been connected with a Sunday school for a long time,—a story of success here and failure there, of expectations realized,

and hopes disappointed, of labours blessed and toils apparently unfruitful, of difficulties encountered and overcome, and of trials under which faith wavered; and it would also be a story of a small band of young men, who, without any of the advantages which occur from high intellectual attainments or eminent social position, devoted themselves to their Master's work; and who, amidst all the trials and vicissitudes with which that Master has disciplined and humbled them, have laboured on sustained by reliance upon His power, and encouraged by the blessing which the gradual though lasting improvement in their school witnessed that He was bestowing on them. I will, therefore, at once introduce my readers to our school as it now is.

It is Sunday afternoon and we arrive at the school-house, a large and handsome building. Entering by the boys' entrance we find ourselves in a large, spacious, lofty room, forty-seven feet long by thirty-seven feet wide. At first sight the place appears to be inconveniently full, but a slight examination will show that while the space is made the most of, sufficient care has been taken in arranging the classes to prevent any inconvenience arising from their proximity to each other. The number of boys in this room is between two hundred and two hundred and fifty, the average attendance during the present year having been 235. Their ages vary from eight to seventeen, and all, with the exception of two divisions, are able to read, the great majority of them fluently and well. They are divided into four classes, that number having been found sufficient for their proper classification, and each class is subdivided into five divisions, each division having its appointed separate teacher.

In the fifth division of the first class, and the first division of the third class, are placed those boys who are unable to read, and who do not receive instruction in Day schools. Difficulty is sometimes experienced in getting this class of boys to attend Sunday school, principally in consequence of the feelings of humiliation naturally attendant upon their ignorance. We have found the plan of keeping them in classes by themselves to work very satisfactorily, as it prevents those comparisons which result from their being mixed with more advanced scholars. At half-past two the school is opened; the Institute Liturgy being used, and a hymn having been sung, the teachers and scholars resume their seats, and teaching begins. While the teachers are engaged with their classes, we will examine the school more closely. As we pass round the room, we shall find a great difference in the condition of the various classes. In some, earnest, efficient, and *thoroughly prepared* teachers are receiving their reward in the fixed attention of their scholars; in

others, the wandering eye and restless demeanour plainly show that something is wrong. Altogether there are twenty teachers at work, nine of whom were formerly scholars in the school. Many of these are young, but their earnest zeal and strict attention to their duties more than make up for their comparative inexperience. Listening to the lessons, we shall find them given according to a printed list, a copy of which is supplied to every teacher and scholar. This list, which is prepared annually, contains a course of Old and New Testament Lessons, chronologically arranged, provision being made for the teaching of the Catechism, and, in the higher classes, of the Thirty-nine Articles. Lessons are also fixed for special days.

The first division of the first class is worthy of notice; it consists of about twelve or fourteen boys, between the ages of fourteen and seventeen, of neat and intelligent appearance, whose general good conduct and cheerful obedience exercise some influence upon the general tone and discipline of the school.

Leaving this room, we now enter an adjoining one, in which are placed boys between six and nine years of age, who are unable to read; those younger than six being taught in the infants' school, which, as before stated, is attached to the girls' school. In this room there is a commodious gallery, capable of holding about 100 children. It is generally full, and frequently the attendance is so large as to necessitate the use of forms in addition to it. These children are under the exclusive management of a lady of great experience, and the systematic course of instruction pursued, and the firm, but mild, discipline maintained, reflects great credit upon her efficiency and zeal. We have not time to enter upon all the arrangements of this class, and must content ourselves by observing the simplicity and interesting nature of the lessons, in the giving of which a box of letters is used, with great advantage.

Our journey is not yet over; another room, a small committee room, has to be visited. In it we find a Bible Class, consisting of about a dozen young men (many of whom are old scholars), and presided over by one of our curates, a clergyman who has recently come among us, and who has earned a high place in our affection, by the active interest he has taken in the school. A short time ago this class caused us much anxiety, but since it has been under the charge of its present leader, its condition has been more satisfactory.

Returning to the room we first visited, the superintendent gives notice to the teachers to close their lessons, and mark the attendance of their scholars. An uniform system of marks is used, by which each scholar who attends punctually, repeats his lessons correctly,

and behaves well, receives three good marks morning and afternoon. At the end of the half year the marks are added up, and each boy who has obtained three-fourths of the full number receives a reward. There are many experienced Sunday school men who object to rewards altogether. The question need not be discussed here, but it may be remarked that one of the principal objections to the system is founded upon the impropriety of feelings of emulation being excited. The plan we adopt of basing the distribution of rewards upon a fixed standard, and not upon comparative merit, meets this objection to a considerable extent. A hymn is then sung, and a short address, generally bearing upon the subject of the lesson, is given by one of the clergy or the superintendent. The closing service of the Institute Liturgy is read, and the boys having been dismissed, the teachers retire into the Committee room, and spend a few minutes in beseeching God's blessing upon their labours, themselves, and their scholars.

On Sunday mornings we have an average attendance of about 150 in the large room, and about fifty-five in the other. Of these, about one-half are taken to church, and the others remain to a children's service, conducted by one of the senior teachers, assisted by two of the elder scholars. With two or three unavoidable exceptions, the teachers sit with their classes in church; and our experience of Sunday mornings, both there and in the school, is certainly very much opposed to views which have recently been expressed.

We have a library, containing about 300 volumes. All the boys in the first three classes, who are able to read, are entitled to its use, and the privilege is only withdrawn in the event of misconduct or great irregularity of attendance. The books, for the most part purchased specially for the school, are well adapted to boys, but the number is hardly sufficient. We have, however, been enabled to make yearly additions to our stock since the library was first opened, three years ago, and hope to do so in the present and future years.

During the six winter months, a course of lectures on familiar subjects is delivered to the elder scholars, illustrated by the magic lanthorn, or by diagrams. These lectures have been beneficial, not only in affording pleasure to our scholars, but in exciting a desire for further information, as has been strongly evidenced by the numerous inquiries made at the library for books bearing upon the subjects. At Christmas time, we have a merry school festival, one evening for the senior, and another evening for the junior children. Tea and cake are plentifully supplied, appropriate pieces are sung, and several series of dissolving views are exhibited, illus-

trating tales and scenes which are told or described by the teachers Many members of the congregation are present, and seem to enjoy the treat as much as the children. The rooms are prettily decorated, and, filled as they are with smiling, happy faces, present a scene of such innocent mirth and happiness, as would force a sympathising smile on the face of the sternest old school dame who ever tyrannised over helpless childhood. These gatherings lose none of their pleasure from their being the only occasions upon which the boys' and girls' schools mix together.

We have monthly teachers' meetings, alternately for business and improvement. At the former, to which no teacher is admitted until he has been six months in the school, the general business of the school is conducted, and teachers and officers are appointed. All the proceedings of these meetings are subject to the revision of the incumbent. I cannot say our deliberations have much of the *nem. con.* character about them; but though discussions frequently arise, they are generally conducted in a proper spirit. A pleasing feature in these meetings is the deference paid by some of the younger to the opinions of their more experienced fellow-labourers. At our improvement meetings some subject connected with Sunday school teaching is discussed, or a lesson is given by one of the teachers, and afterwards criticised.

A teachers' preparation class, at which the lessons for the following Sunday are studied, is held weekly. The state of this class forms an exception to the general prosperous state of our school. The attendance is very small, rarely more than seven or eight being present. A good preparation class is invaluable to a teacher, whether he be efficient or inefficient, experienced or inexperienced; and some of us feel very keenly the unsatisfactory condition of our own. It is hoped that the anxious and prayerful consideration which is now being devoted to this subject may, by the blessing of God, effect a beneficial change.

Such is our Sunday school now; we humbly believe that God's blessing rests upon it, and that He has been pleased to prosper our labours. May the grateful joy this belief is calculated to inspire animate us to continued and increased exertions in his service!

H.

TEACHERS' PRAYER UNION.

We have reason to believe that the Weekly Union of Sunday school teachers in prayer, on Tuesdays, for special supplication to God in relation to their work, is extending to a larger number, and we are sure, on the authority of the Divine Word, that it is thus most effectually that we shall obtain that "power from on high" needful for us to labour successfully as teachers of the Lambs of Christ's flock.

The following are the subjects proposed for the ensuing quarter,—

July 1st.—*That the Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule the hearts of all engaged in the Sunday school work.*

July 8th.—*The Sunday School Institute*, that by God's blessing it may be made instrumental in greatly promoting the efficiency of Sunday schools.

July 15th.—*The Ministers of the Gospel*, that they may set forth the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ, both in their preaching and in their lives.

July 22nd.—*All Superintendents*, that they may be endued with wisdom from on high, to enable them to rule with discretion in the fear of the Lord.

July 29th.—*For Sunday school teachers*, that they may be apt to teach, and themselves taught of God.

Aug. 5th.—*All Sunday scholars*, that they may become true disciples of our Lord.

Aug. 12th.—*The Parents and Families of our Sunday scholars*, that all may become the followers of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Aug. 19th.—*For those who have passed from our Schools into the world*, that they may continue in those things that they have learned.

Aug. 26th.—*The due observance of the Sabbath*, that it may become a day of *holy* rest to the working classes.

Sept. 2nd.—*The Church of Christ*, that all who profess and call themselves Christians, may hold the faith in the Unity of the Spirit.

Sept 9th.—*The spread of the Gospel*, especially amongst the unconverted of our own land, and for all missionaries abroad.

Sept. 16th.—*The Church of England*, that it may be preserved from all false doctrine, heresy, and schism.

Sept. 23rd.—*For our Queen and her Family.*—That God will endue them with His Holy Spirit, enrich them with His heavenly grace, prosper them with all happiness, and bring them to His everlasting kingdom.

Sept. 30th.—*For our Country*, that it may become a Christian country, not only in name, but in deed and in truth.

*** Copies of this Paper may be obtained free, on application to the Offices of the Institute, 41, Ludgate Hill, E.C.

GUILDFORD.

A CONFERENCE of Clergymen, and Lay co-operators in Church work was held at Abbott's Hospital, Guildford, on Tuesday evening, June the 3rd, under the presidency of the Venerable the ARCHDEACON OF SURREY, at which the subject of SUNDAY SCHOOLS was discussed under the following heads:—

a. Their importance, notwithstanding the present efficiency of Day schools.

b. Arrangement.

1. Of whom to consist, as to age and class of society.

2. Hours of instruction.

3. Course of instruction.

4. Superintendent.

5. Teacher's Qualifications.

i. Defects in the present system of many Sunday schools.

ii. How may the Sunday be made less irksome and more attractive to the children, but not less profitable?

A large number of the local clergy and of Sunday school teachers were present; and Mr. F. Norton attended, by the kind invitation of the Rev. T. G. Hatchard, to represent the Institute.

The ARCHDEACON, in opening the subject, remarked, that although Sunday schools were looked upon with an amount of contempt in some quarters, he considered that they were one of the most important agencies for good that this country possessed; yet there was in the management of many schools such an amount of defect that they made the Sunday and its services most irksome to the scholars, and for that reason he had suggested the last subject on the paper as being the most important one for them to consider.

It must ever be borne in mind that all the good work in this country, in reference to the education of the lower classes, had its origin in the Sunday school system. In former times, it occupied the place of the Day school, but it was a mistake to imagine that, on account of their increased efficiency, the Day schools superseded the necessity for the Sunday school. It had been said that mere secular education would make children into clever devils. In this country, about three millions per annum were spent on education, one from the government, and two from the public.

Why, then, were the Sunday schools so important, if the Day schools were efficient? Religion was taught in them, and, for the most part, the masters and mistresses were religious; but this would soon cease to be the case, if the wishes of some of the Dissenters were carried out in reference to national education. They wanted to separate the religious from the secular education—asking the Government to supply the secular education alone, and to leave each party to provide for the religious education of its own members; but the Government very wisely refused to separate the religious from the secular education given in our National schools, although equally ready to help all denominations.

There is a peculiar atmosphere about the Sunday school which renders it alike attractive and valuable, and that is Love. All the teachers are voluntary workers; even the day school teachers if they teach in the Sunday school, do so voluntarily, and several classes of society unite in the work with Christian fellowship. The aim of the Sunday school teacher is not as in the day school, to instruct the head, but to reach the heart; and it is found to be the best means to accomplish that end. Elder scholars can be led to attend the Sunday school long after they have ceased to attend the day schools, and who would get instruction nowhere else.

The great defect, he considered, in our Sunday schools was that they taxed the physical energies of the children too much; they mostly assembled at nine,

and went through the Collect and Gospel, or Scripture lesson, then they went off to the Church Service with a dry sermon to crown the whole. The service alone was too long for young children, especially considering the uncomfortable seats they usually occupied. Then they met again at two, were taught until three, and often had to attend another service lasting up to half-past four. He advocated some abridgement of the school hours, and strongly urged upon the teachers the necessity for making their teaching more interesting.

The Rev. T. G. HATCHARD said, the need of Sunday schools as auxiliaries to the church, had increased rather than diminished at the present time, when the tendency to sectarianism was on the increase; and, moreover, they should strive to gather in the children of the upper classes, for he had one of his own children as a teacher, and another as a scholar in his own Sunday school. He should confine his remarks to the five P's; namely, Piety, Prayer, Perseverance, Preparation, Punctuality. *Piety* was most essential to a true Sunday school teacher, and it must be such piety as was evidenced by Christian conduct, for very great evils were brought upon the system by the inconsistency of some teachers. *Prayer* was indispensable, it was the oil that caused the lamp to burn; always before going forth to his school, a teacher should pray both for himself and his scholars, and even after they have ceased to attend his class, he should keep a book of remembrance and follow them through life with his prayers. *Preparation* was another important; duty a teacher must be himself constantly learning, he must keep himself refreshed from the Word of God, and other sources. Dr. Cumming always studied the lesson, especially for his Sunday school class. Dr. Arnold kept up his study of the Greek language on purpose for his class, remarking that he wished his pupils always to drink from the pure water of a springing fountain. If we were not constantly renewing our store of knowledge, our teaching would soon become discursive, pointless and wearying. Even the milk for babes must be fresh to be nourishing. *Perseverance:* many teachers did run well, but after a time their love waxed cold; but if we would be successful teachers, we must hold on to the end, we must not get faint hearted, because we do not see the result of our work. *Punctuality* was his next point. Teachers should ever look upon this as duty, and provide accordingly. If they hurry every morning, to get to school in time, they would lack that calm frame of mind which was so essential to their work.

Mr. F. NORTON then addressed the Meeting on the arrangement of the Sunday school under the several heads above mentioned, and on the defects and the best means of remedying them, after which a Serjeant spoke on the importance of the work amongst the poor and outcast.

The ARCHDEACON, in closing the Conference, advocated the extension of the Sunday school system to all classes of our Church members, but thought it would be desirable, as far as possible, to keep them separate. He agreed that the minister should not be the superintendent of the school, unless there were extra curates, so that one could well be spared to undertake it. But the minister should have the entire control and supervision of all that was going on, and should occasionally take each class himself, and give them a lesson in the presence of his teachers. He strongly recommended the plan of Training Classes for the teachers, such as he had seen in the school of the Rev. Canon Champneys. Ladies would often be found the most effective teachers for the elder, rougher lads.

Sunday School Institute.

THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING of the Institute was held on Monday evening, April 14, at St. James's Hall, and was very numerously attended. The chair was taken at seven o'clock, by the Right Rev. the LORD BISHOP OF LONDON; and on the platform were, among others, John Labouchere, Esq. (the Treasurer of the Society), the Revs. Daniel Moore, Sanderson Robins, E. Auriol, C. D. Marston, J. Mc. Connel Hussey, Thomas Nolan, &c.

The proceedings having been opened by singing a hymn, and the offering of prayer by the Rev. E. Auriol,

Mr. J. G. FLEET, one of the Honorary Secretaries, read the Report, which, after detailing the operations of the Society during the past year,—the Meetings, Lectures, Training Classes, Deputations, and Publications, — proceeded to notice the objections which had been raised against Sunday schools in the evidence before, and in the report made by the Education Commission. These mainly referred to the alleged sufficiency of the National School to supersede the necessity of Sunday schools—the inferior abilities of the teachers in them to those of Day schools—the irksomeness of Sabbath day teaching to the children—the tendency of such instruction to weaken family influence—and the Sectarian influence of such schools in leading the children to attend the churches or chapels with which they are connected. The Report referred to the special appeal which had been made to increase the funds of the Institute during the past year, which resulted in nearly £1,000 being raised, to be applied towards reducing the amount due by the Society. Irrespective of this fund, the financial statement showed the general receipts for the year to be £3,089 2s. 3d., and the expenditure £3,579 11s. 10d., leaving a balance overdrawn of £489 13s. 7d.; while the assets of the Society were stated to be £2,337 9s. 6d., or £119 18s. 8d. in excess of its liabilities.

The Right Rev. CHAIRMAN said, My Christian friends, before I introduce to your notice the gentlemen who are especially charged with the duty of addressing you this evening, you will, perhaps, allow me to make a few remarks as to my own impression from hearing the Report. It has probably struck most of you, as it has struck myself, that that Report has somewhat of a defensive—in the beginning, a sort of an apologetic—character, which is scarcely needed. Your presence here, in such large numbers, shows that with you, at all events, the cause of Sunday school teaching requires no apology and no defence—that you are convinced that the object which the Institute has in view is a sacred object, that it is an object which God has blessed in times past, and that you are confident that He will continue to bless it for the time to come.

We know how much the education of this country owes to what may be called its first start in the Sunday school system. That obligation is acknowledged, I believe, by all those who know most about the progress of education in this country of late years; and not least acknowledged by those who are supposed in the Report to have expressed doubts as to the value of Sunday school teaching in the present day. All grant that, if you go back a few years, you will find that there was no real zeal for education throughout this country, except that which was fostered by Sunday schools; all admit that it is to the Sunday school movement that that great change in the education of the country, which we have lived to witness, is mainly, under God's blessing, to be attributed. Therefore, having regard to what has

been achieved in times past, the promoters of the Sunday school system have certainly some claim upon the gratitude of the country.

But, of course, it is quite possible that old plans, which worked very well for a time, may have worn out, and that a system which did much to start education in the country some forty or fifty years ago may have ceased to have that important bearing upon educational interests which it manifestly had at that period. I believe, however, that all present are convinced that no such change has come over the country as would make Sunday school teaching less necessary than it was before. Thank God, it is, indeed, less necessary that there should be the teaching of reading and writing in Sunday schools. In former times, the Sunday school constituted almost the sole means that the children of the poor had of obtaining any education at all; and, thank God, the necessity for giving this secular instruction on Sunday has now passed away. But, with the increase of secular instruction during the week, I, for one, am perfectly convinced there is even a greater necessity than existed before for making the religious instruction of Sunday keep pace with the secular instruction of the week.

Before I proceed further, I will make two remarks as regards my experience in my own peculiar department as a bishop. There are two special things that a bishop has to do, in which the other clergy are not employed. One is the confirmation of the young. I should like to know how confirmations could ever hold that place which our Church intended them to hold in the religious system by which our young people are brought near to God, if it were not for such institutions as our Sunday schools. I should like to know how the plan of the Church, which insists so much upon the young being catechised before they are brought to the bishop to be confirmed, could ever be thoroughly carried out without the system of Sunday schools. Even with regard to the children of the upper classes, it is a great blessing to think that, at the time of confirmation, something answering to the instructions of the Sunday school reaches them, and that, if at no other period of their life, they are at the time of their preparation for confirmation brought into the enjoyment of that great privilege which the intercourse between the pastor and the younger members of his flock on directly religious subjects secures. And, then, with regard to the preparation of the children of the poor for confirmation, why, the very greatest difficulty which we have in this matter is owing to the Sunday school system not being sufficiently extended. If you look at the Confirmation papers, which, in the time of Bishop Blomfield, and in mine, have been circulated annually in this diocese, you will find that we were obliged to make a relaxation with respect to the children of the poor; that, whereas the nature of the rite seems to require that the person to be confirmed should have attained fifteen or sixteen years of age, we were compelled to announce that we were pre-prepared to accept these children at an earlier age. And why? Because there is a great danger that, if we do not reach them at an earlier age, they will escape our control altogether. What, then, is it that is wanted to keep up the connexion between the pastor and these children when they leave the Day school? Exactly such a system as that which this Institute supports—a system of Sunday schools, whereby the children who have left the Day school shall still be brought into intimate relations with their pastor on the Lord's day, and the good impressions made in early childhood shall be kept alive till they are entering upon manhood; and if our Sunday school system

were extended further than it is, there would be no necessity for saying that those who, from their very situation in life, have less advantages than others, should be admitted earlier to the solemn rite of Confirmation. Therefore, as entrusted with the administration of the great ordinance which occupies so very large a portion of the time of the Bishop of this diocese, I, for one, could never consent that there should be any diminution of our efforts to keep alive the system of Sunday schools.

There is another portion of my duty in which the efficacy of Sunday schools is manifestly proved. When a young man comes for ordination, in those preliminary conversations which pass between the bishop and the candidate, one question which is, I believe, always asked is, whether he has had any opportunity of teaching in a Sunday school. I feel, as I believe every bishop feels, that if it is a Sunday school teacher whom I have to deal with in regard to ordination, I have a person before me who is not altogether untrained for the difficult duties on which, at an early age, he is entering; and I always consider it a good sign in the candidate for ordination, and feel a satisfaction in admitting him to the more arduous duties of the same kind which his ordination opens up, when I have the assurance that he has assisted a worthy pastor, under whom he has lived, by instructing the children of the poor, and that, therefore, speaking to men respecting their souls will not be altogether new to him. I went the other day to Cambridge, and there visited the Jesus Lane Sunday school. I believe there is no bishop who is not acquainted with that school. You have there a great association of undergraduates in the University who unite themselves together, and have done so for many years, to teach the children of the poor. The Sunday schools are under the management of the young men themselves, and untold blessings have been derived by young men preparing for ordination from their work in that Institution. When a young man goes to college, and the restraints of home or of school are removed, one of the greatest helps to a religious life that he can have during his three years of trial at the University is to be associated in some religious work with the religious young men around him; and these Sunday schools at Cambridge have now been blessed of God for many years to be a practical training for the work of the ministry to many young men who, in after life, have done good service to their Master's cause. I feel, therefore, that I cannot, in the office which I hold, hesitate to bear my testimony to the good effects of Sunday school teaching, and its absolute necessity if these two departments of the Bishop's office are to be well brought to accomplishment—that which has to do with confirmation, and that which has to do with the ordination of young pastors in Christ's Church.

Now, quite independently of the peculiar thoughts which may suggest themselves to the mind of a Bishop, I should have thought that the progress which has been made in secular education in this country during the last twenty years had rather made Sunday schools more, than less, necessary than they were previously. In the first place, if you are going to impart to the young a great deal of secular education, it would certainly be a great mistake to allow their religious education to lag behind. But, then, it may be said that this religious education is communicated in the day-school by the master or mistress of the school. I am thankful to say that a great deal of it is; I am thankful to say that in all our schools a great deal of religious knowledge is communicated; and I rejoice to believe that no system of education is likely ever to be popular in this country

which does not make religious knowledge go hand in hand with secular knowledge. But, then, my experience in this matter teaches me also, that whilst it is perfectly easy to give in a day-school a great deal of religious knowledge, it is not easy to make the lessons about religion really religious. The great difficulty, which I think every man who has had experience in school-keeping or school teaching will admit to exist is, that, while you may easily read the Scriptures, and give children a great familiarity, not only with the history and geography, but even with the doctrines contained in the Scriptures, it is not very easy to make the common work of the day-school that sort of process which we wish to make it, and whereby we shall actually reach the child's soul. We desire to be able to speak to the children in such language as will touch their hearts and consciences; and, though we have no doubt reason to hope that yearly the number of our religious schoolmasters and schoolmistresses will increase, and that yearly, more and more, the instruction about religion will become really religious, yet the Sunday-school certainly does afford a more direct opportunity for making appeals to the heart and conscience than the ordinary instruction of the day-school. I can conceive nothing more alarming than that we should communicate a great deal of knowledge about religion, and yet not make the children with whom we are dealing religious. If it is a bad thing to separate between secular and religious knowledge, it is a worse thing to separate between the knowledge of religion and religion in the heart; and no man is in a more disadvantageous position than he to whom all the truths of religion are familiar as mere matters of knowledge, and in whose case there has not, by the blessing of God's Spirit, been an entrance gained for these truths into the heart. The man who has never heard of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, when he hears of it first, is greatly touched by it; but he who has known all about it from his earliest childhood, if it has never made any impression upon his heart, is the most difficult man in the world to influence. And, therefore, I say that, as our secular instruction requires religious instruction to go hand in hand with it, so does our communication of ordinary religious knowledge require that sort of spiritual intercourse which the Sunday school affords an opportunity of cherishing between the teacher and the taught.

I think the objection mentioned in the Report, that Sunday schools make people go to a place of worship, is the most extraordinary objection I ever heard of. I should have thought it was the strongest possible recommendation of the system, that people who go to Sunday schools are thereby induced to attend Church or Chapel. I am sure, for my own part, I am very glad to hear of it, and I hope that will continue to be a characteristic of Sunday school teaching to the end of the world. Why, what in the world do Sunday schools exist for, except to make people more religious; and how are people to be more religious, and yet not show their religion by going either to Church or Chapel? The word "Sectarian," is introduced in the Report; it is there stated to be an objection to the Sunday school system, that it has "a sectarian tendency." I presume that by that is meant, that it tends to make men attach themselves to one section of Christians, and not to Christianity in the abstract. Now, I have no great faith in Christianity in the abstract. True Christianity will generally show itself in adhesion to one or other of those existing forms of religion which have wound themselves round men's hearts through the associations of centuries; and I believe it is a very great blessing, that Sunday school teaching does lead young people to frequent the house of God.

I will make only one or two more remarks. One is, that I cannot conceive any parish being at all well administered without a Sunday school. I cannot conceive how there can be that union running through the whole parish, which is the very essence of the good working of the parochial system without a Sunday school. What is it that is to bring children and their parents, and the young people of the upper classes, and men hard-worked during the week, but who can spare some time on the Lord's Day—what is it that is to bring them altogether, to unite them in one common work, except union in the Sunday school? I am quite sure that those who have observed how young persons of the upper classes have been interested in their teaching in the Sunday school, what good it has done to their own souls, how it has brought them into intimate relations with the poor and with their pastors, will allow that if our parishes are to have a real union, extending through all ranks and all ages, there is hardly any means by which we can keep up this union except the Sunday school.

The other remark which I would make is this, that I think it is a matter for serious consideration to the busy part of our population, whether it be not their especial duty to have to do with Sunday schools. I have mentioned before, on public occasions, that I know two of the busiest men in England,—two men who hold almost the highest positions in the profession of the law,—each of whom has, for many years, spent a portion of his Sunday in teaching in his parish Sunday school. While the exigencies of business occupy them from early in the morning till late at night throughout the week, and the temptation is strong to spend Sunday in the country air, far away from the scenes of business and from the smoke and fatigue of town, they have thought it a sacred duty to remain in London on Sunday, that they might take part in the work of the parochial Sunday school. And what can be done by men who are oppressed with the greatest amount of professional labour, and whose names, if I were to mention them, would be recognised by every one as those of men at the very head of their profession, what can be done, I say, by them may be done by the busiest man in London. And there is no one who needs so much that sort of spiritual refreshment which the Sunday school gives as the man who is being busily engaged six days in the week in his ordinary secular avocations. The world is very apt to get such a hold on his heart, that he has little delight for things that are above the world. The more need is there, then, for him to prize every opportunity whereby the things of another life will be brought before him in their reality. And I know no way in which the reality of the things of another life may be better brought before a man than by his speaking to a little child as to his soul, and heaven, and the Lord Jesus. It is all very well to talk about the outside of religion, but when a man speaks to a little child whose very simplicity gives a sacredness to the deep things of religion, he must be a hypocrite indeed, if he does not feel in his heart what he is endeavouring to raise in the mind of the child. Thus to be brought face to face with an immortal soul, endeavouring to draw out what is good, and to lead that little child to the Lord and Saviour,—the man who is in that position once every week will certainly go back to the common occupations of the law or of trade freshened; he will carry with him into his ordinary business something of that higher atmosphere into which he has been brought in the presence of that child. I believe men will find that they have more time for giving themselves to this occupation than they suppose if they will only

make the trial. I am sure that they will never repent any sacrifice which they may make in this cause, and that God's blessing will attend the self-denial which leads the busy man to devote a portion of his Sunday to the instruction of the children of the poor.

The Rev. DANIEL MOORE, M.A., said, My Christian friends, the resolution which I have been asked to submit to the meeting is as follows:—

"That the Report now read be adopted, and that the gentlemen whose names will be read by the Secretary form the Committee for the ensuing year."

[Names read.]

In days like these, when so many debatable issues are raised on the subject of education, it is truly refreshing to find ourselves upon neutral ground, to find that there is one plot of the education field which we may occupy, without any interference, without any dread of privy council, revised codes, or re-revised codes, and in which we may pursue a course of honourable usefulness, no man forbidding us. Such a plot is the Sunday school, an institution which I never hesitate to rank foremost among the inventions of modern philanthrophy, and which must ever make the name of Robert Raikes, of Gloucester, first among those of Christian patriots. It is this institution which the Church of England Sunday School Institute was originated to defend, and to bring into a state of the greatest efficiency. Those who were engaged in Sunday schools many years ago know too well what we suffered for want of such an organisation as this. I can remember the time when, as Sunday school teachers, we had no such books as those which are now provided for our instruction in arranged classes. We had then to fall back upon such books as were supplied by the Sunday School Union; and I am quite sure that all of us remember that the books supplied by that Society, valuable as they were, because we had no better, contained many things which made it extremely inconvenient for Churchmen to adopt them. Books which were intended for the use of Sunday school teachers were framed upon the peculiarities of dissent; they ignored, if they did not contradict, some of the fundamental teaching of our Church. Hence there was, of necessity, a want of unity between the week-day and the Sunday school teaching, between what the children heard at school and what they heard at church; and some parts of the Assembly's Catechism, for example, were found to consort very inadequately with our formulas, our Creeds, and our Catechism. I, for one, therefore, rejoiced very greatly when this Institute was first established. I felt that it met a great want; I felt that it was likely to bring together Churchmen in Church schools; that it would probably cause us to act more upon a plan, more upon some recognised system, instead of, as I know to have been the case before, all teachers being left to do exactly what was right in their own eyes, so that every school had a system of its own.

I believe that this Institute has done very much in awakening clergymen themselves to a sense of the importance of the instrumentality which is within their reach, as a great auxiliary to the pastorate. I am afraid that most of us must plead guilty to the charge of not having used as we ought to have done this most beneficent appliance for influencing the minds of the people. By means of this Institute, however, there has been stirred up an eager and anxious spirit amongst the parochial clergy. They have mixed more with schools, mixed more with teachers; they have thrown themselves more heartily into the organisation of the school than they ever did before this Institute was formed. I do believe,

too, that the publications of the Institute have done much towards giving a higher tone to the teaching of our schools. They have enabled our teachers to keep their ordinary Sunday instruction on a par with the teaching and the festivals of the Church, instead of continuing in that incoherent and unconnected mode of teaching which too commonly prevailed before this Institute was established. I feel, therefore, that we are greatly indebted to this institution, and I trust that my brethren around me will acknowledge that debt, if they have not done so already, by joining themselves to the Institute, causing its periodicals to be circulated among their teachers, and adopting its books in their schools. I, for one, have adopted the books almost from the very commencement, and I can testify to their usefulness. I consider that excellent judgment and great discrimination were displayed in the compilation of the Hymn Book; and as regards the Litany, having for many years past used it almost every Sunday myself, I can testify to the awakened interest and sustained attention manifested by the children in giving the responses in that Litany—an interest and attention infinitely superior to those which I was enabled to maintain by means of the extempore prayer with which we previously commenced school. I do feel, therefore, that this Institute has very large claims on the sympathy and support of the parochial clergy.

I believe it has also strong claims to the sympathy and support of Christians generally. I listened with curiosity to the various forms of imaginary objections adverted to in the report against the system of Sunday-schools generally. I am persuaded that if those objections represent the strength of the argument against Sunday schools, we have nothing to fear. It does seem to me to have been abundantly proved to us by the Bishop of London, that in exact proportion as we find secular knowledge increasing, are we bound to give religious knowledge to the children of the poor: and I trust that the idea will take full possession of the minds of teachers and of the minds of clergy, that there must always be, and always should be, a divorce between the parochial teaching and Sunday school teaching. I have always desired that children should feel on the Sunday, not only that they are being instructed in different subjects, not only that they are being taught by different persons, but that they are under an entirely different plan of instruction on that day; that the economy of the Sunday school is altogether peculiar; and that, instead of feeling that they have a teacher set over them to whom they must of necessity look up as a superior, they should be enabled to feel that they have in their teacher an adviser and a friend. They see him sitting Sunday after Sunday the centre of a like circle of happy faces. He looks leniently on their mistakes; he tries to burden their minds as little as possible; he endeavours to excite their interest: he listens to the small details of their personal and family history; the whole scene is one where there may be an appeal to the conscience, an appeal to the affections, an appeal to those sensibilities and feelings, to which, from the very nature of the case, the national schoolmaster cannot possibly address himself. However far we may extend the national school system, we can never hope to supersede the necessity for that kind of teaching which is given by a kind and affectionate Sunday school teacher while engaged in a friendly intercourse with his pupils, as he sits with them once a week in the class.

I will not, sir, knowing that there are friends to come after me who intend to address the teachers present, on points specially connected with their

duty and their work as teachers, occupy the attention of this meeting much longer. I must, however, express my strong and hearty sympathy with the more active friends of this Institute. I pray God that He would bless the efforts of the Committee, strengthen their bonds, extend their operations, and enable them to go forth in that great work to which in God's providence they have been called. To many now before me, it is known why I take so deep an interest in Sunday schools. True, I might be expected as a pastor, with a large parish committed to my trust, to feel an interest in an agency which is so materially helpful to the pastorate; I might be expected, as a friend of religious education, to desire the extension and improvement of a system which is so well adapted to diffuse religious education among the poor. But, independently of this, there are ties and sympathies which attach me to the cause of the Sunday school—ties still more close, still more interesting. For many years before I was called to the duties of the ministry, before I was even called to the duties of the University, I had been engaged in all the varieties of Sunday school work, as a lower Sunday school teacher, as an advanced teacher, as a superintendent, as a librarian. I had gone through all these offices: I had learnt the value of teaching to the soul of every person engaged in that blessed work; and it may, therefore, well be supposed that I feel a deep interest in all that concerns the welfare and prosperity of Sunday schools. I look back to the period of my Sunday school duties as a time of happiest, and of most sacred and profitable memories. Discouragements I had, as you have; self-reproaches for defective and unworthy service I had, as no doubt you have; but I was never without much to encourage me in my work, and for years after I returned from the university, I was visited and consulted by youths who had been in my class, who still looked upon me as their guide, and who knew that I should rejoice to see in their advancing Christian character, aye, and in their advancing social respectability, evidence that my "labour" was "not in vain in the Lord." And, my dear friends, let me give you one other encouragement, if indeed, you can need any. As clergymen, we sometimes visit the bedside of the sick and the dying, and we sometimes find the mention of the Sunday school touching a chord of awakened sensibility. We then find the thoughts of the sick going back to the school where they were once taught. They remember the sabbaths they have spent; they remember a verse of Scripture or a hymn, learned from the teacher whom they loved; all these things rush back to the mind of the penitent one, with all the power of early associations, and all the sanctified remembrance of holier and happier days. Such rewards, my friends, will be yours. Be assured that if the bread be cast upon the waters it shall be seen after many days, seen by others if not by you. It cannot be lost. Your work is immortal—the fruit is immortal. If it were possible that both should perish, yet your reward should be immortal; "for they that are teachers shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

The Rev. SANDERSON ROBINS, M.A., said I have great pleasure in seconding the proposal, that the report just read be adopted, and I do not think there is a single expression in that report to which any one present could object. There can be no question that the work, for the furtherance of which we are assembled to-night, is a good work. This has been proved by God's blessing, year after year, resting upon it; it has been proved in the experience of thousands upon thousands of teachers, and of a greater number of children

trained in our Sunday schools than will ever be known till the great day of account. Until the establishment of Sunday schools, our Church might be said to be defective in that thoughtful, careful preparation which the Church of Rome, and various dissenting communities have made, as a rule, with regard to the laity—I mean by providing work for lay people to do; and I am persuaded that no better work was ever provided for the members of the Christian Church than that of helping pastors to train the little ones who belong to the flock of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I suppose that a great many of you were, like myself, taken somewhat by surprise on hearing the enumeration in the report of the strange and unreasonable objections urged against Sunday schools. I conclude that these objections must have existed in the minds of many persons, or so much pains would not have been taken to provide an answer. But of all the strange and unreasonable objections, that which seems farthest from all sense or meaning is the one which was urged by Her Majesty's Commissioners. That they who are advocating the cause of national schools should find fault with us who try, in a humble Christian way, to supplement what they could not and cannot perform, is of all things the most unreasonable. Let us suppose that a national schoolmaster, the best trained and the best qualified for his work, is desirous of leading his children into earnest spiritual religion. Why, unless the grace of God be very strong in his heart, and unless well nigh a miracle be wrought in his daily life, he cannot succeed as an ordinary Sunday school teacher succeeds. Think, I entreat you, what hindrances he must find in the multiplication table, the history of England, geography, and grammar. How badly these must mingle with those subjects of dearest and tenderest interest which we desire to communicate to the youngest and tenderest of those who come under instruction. I do not mean to say that the national schoolmaster will not be very usefully employed in teaching religious subjects; but he will be so only up to a certain point, and I am as sure as I can be of anything, that he will leave something to be done by some one else. On the other hand, when Sunday dawns, we put aside all secularities, we put aside all those secular things, the teaching of which is apt to produce feelings of irritation and impatience on both sides; and the teacher, gathering the little children round him, with nothing to irritate, nothing to discompose him, teaches them not so much the facts, not so much the technicalities of theology, as that which goes to the heart, that which he speaks out of the fulness of his own affections concerning the Lord who bought by his own precious blood him and the little children committed to his charge. I am sure that the experience of Sunday school teachers will bear witness that it is not so much by the letter of what they teach, as by the spirit in which it is imparted that the souls of little children are benefitted, and grow up into the fulness of Christian character; it is when in all the simplicity of Christian truth we lead them to Him who forbade that little children should be put out of His presence, who welcomed them with open arms, and laid His hands upon them and blessed them.

Remember what the position of these children will be when their childhood is past, when they are launched upon the world, when they are entering upon their several provided duties. Think how temptation lies in wait for them at every street corner; think how the enemy of souls is ever watchful, diligent, crafty, using every opportunity, putting in force every engine, laying a snare and a pitfall before them at every step they take; think how dili-

gent we ought to be so to pre-occupy their minds, and so to furnish them with a resource in time of trial, that, by God's grace, they may be kept from falling. I suppose that in these times the most careless and unthoughtful amongst us must have been well nigh overwhelmed with the thought of growing infidelity. When we see how many persons who made a fair promise at the outset of life, how many concerning whom hopes were once entertained that they would be examples to the world, and be of great use to the Church of Christ, have fallen away into utter unbelief, our hearts would sink within us, our hopes would be trampled down in the dust, if we did not know that God is able to maintain his own cause. Let us be thankful that there are men of learning, and of intelligence, and of unquestionable piety, who are addressing themselves to this great question. But I believe that the safeguards of faith are to be stored up not so much in the intellect as in the heart; I believe that if we can train little children to know and love God, if we can make them think of God as a Father, unspeakably gracious and pitiful and long-suffering towards them, if we can show them how His blessed Word will satisfy every want of their spiritual nature, and meet all the yearnings of their hearts, we shall have made the best provision to secure them against the assaults of infidelity. Are they consciously ignorant, and weak, and overburdened with sin? Then let us point them to Him "who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." If they have learned to love Him, if they have thought of God as their Father, and Jesus as their Brother, their Teacher, and their Guide, their Shepherd, and their All in All, they are more strengthened to bear the burden of life, and better furnished to resist all the attacks of the enemy, than they would be if they were trained in all the scholarship of the age, and had been put in possession of all the metaphysical arguments that might be adduced against metaphysical objections.

And let me say that if we are to be really useful to the children of our Sunday schools, we must teach them in the spirit of our blessed Master; we must teach them in a gentle, patient, loving way, making great allowance for the waywardness and the unthoughtfulness and the restlessness of little children; we must try and make the Sabbath a delight to them, so that when years have passed by they may remember the days of their youth, and think how Sunday was the happiest day of all the week. I believe there are Sunday school teachers who possess the wonderful and most enviable faculty of making little children happy, and of so leading them into the very marrow of spiritual subjects, instead of contenting themselves with the dry bones, that they long for the time when they shall stand side by side in their teacher's class. And let me remark that the school period is not the only period of the child's life to which the teacher's care should extend. When children have been entrusted to you by God's Providence in early life for instruction, you should try to maintain a communication with them afterwards; you should endeavour not to lose sight of them when they pass away from the school and enter into the various departments of active life to which they have been called; you should ever be ready to receive them with open arms, and let them come to you for counsel, for advice, for a word of admonition, as they may require it. Ay, and there is indeed enough in this great town to quicken our zeal, and well nigh enough to break our hearts. We see, perhaps, a boy who has committed his first act of dishonesty, who loses his situation, who goes step by step in the downward path, till he becomes familiar with the workhouse, with the prison;

or worse, if possible, we see one of those poor unfortunates, whose presence in London is the scandal and humiliation of this great and moral and religious nation. Take them at the very worst, and there was a time when that boy or that girl might have been saved; there was a time when an extended hand might have helped them, when a word, kindly and gently and earnestly spoken, for Jesus's sake, might have turned them into a better way. Oh, my friends, if you have lost sight of the children of your classes, I do implore you, for your own soul's sake, for the brethren's sake, for Jesus's sake, watch over them; you cannot tell how much good you may do them; you cannot tell how God may give a blessing, even to the feeblest effort, for the saving of some poor heart, which is now well nigh overwhelmed with sin and misery. And let me add that occasions are continually occurring when a word spoken in season would prove very precious. Perhaps there is some foolish quarrel which might be healed, and which let alone deprives the youth of his situation, or sends the poor girl out to starve, or worse, into the streets. Perhaps there is some fault deepening into a great habitual sin, from which the former pupil might have been turned aside. Whatever the case may be, by a little earnest effort, by a little sympathising care, you may possibly save from great harm children who were committed to you as their spiritual instructor. These are golden opportunities to possess: it is the seed time, and you cannot tell how great may be the harvest. The world, with its temptations, may after all be too strong for our efforts; but let us proceed in our work, and whether it be among children at school, or among boys and girls who have left school, let us be diligent and earnest and prayerful, ever praying with them and praying for them. "In the morning let us sow our seed, and in the evening let us not hold our hand, for we know not whether shall prosper this or that, or whether both shall be good alike."

The motion was then put and carried.

The Rev. C. D. Marston, M A., said: My Christian friends, I have undertaken in compliance with the kind invitation of the Committee of the Sunday school Institute, to address you to-night for a time, and it will be but a very short time, under the circumstances, upon "*The Intelligent Study of the Bible.*" I desire at the very outset, in order in some measure to clear my way, to draw a distinction between the intelligent study of the Bible and the merely intellectual study of it; for I thank God that I feel to the depth of my heart the very forcible expressions which have fallen to-night from the lips of more than one speaker as to the very great danger there is of a mere intellectual acquaintance with the things of God. I am sure that no soul is more barren, and no soul more likely to come to harm, than the soul of that man who is so far acquainted with Divine things as to exercise his wit and his learning and his ability upon them, while he is a perfect stranger to them in his heart and in his life. I therefore hope it will be quite understood that I say not a word in defence of the intellectual study of the Bible, strictly speaking; I would rather sit down and not utter a single sentence than that anybody should suppose I stand here as the champion in such a cause as that. But I do feel, and I trust you will all agree with me, that it is a great necessity of the days in which we live that we should have an intellectual acquaintance with the Word of God. Infidelity is springing up rapidly around us, and assuming gigantic proportions, and if God has given us powers of intelligence they are not to be thrown away, but we are to sanctify all the powers we possess, however great or however small, to His service

and his glory. I am, moreover, sure that if there be one thing which more than another calls for man's intelligent study it is the blessed Word of God, that Word which He has given us that we may pore over and ponder it, that we may be made wise thereby, and enabled to glorify Him for ever.

It is not my purpose to-night to lead you to the consideration of the various points connected with the Divine origin and authority of the Word of God. I take it for granted that all who are before me feel, in common with myself, that the Bible is the Word of the living God. My object is rather to encourage you in the study in a certain direction of that which we all conceive to be the utterance of the Divine mind and will; and I trust that in the few words which I have to utter, I shall be enabled so to speak as to assist you in the patient prosecution of what I have ventured to call the intelligent study of the Word of God. The more we study that Word the more shall we find it worthy of all our pains. It is interesting to observe the amount of pains now bestowed upon the study of God's Word. It is not the least striking of the signs of the times in which we live that scholarship and learning and ability of the very highest order are now frequently brought to bear upon the elucidation of that Word. There was a time when scholarship bestowed all its pains, and indulged all its taste, in the study and elucidation of heathen authors; but now we see our ripest scholars, and men of most varied attainments, those who have read and thought most deeply, entering the field of biblical criticism, not, I grant, in all cases with a favourable disposition towards the Bible, but in all, at least, intent upon considering and contemplating the contents and the claims of the Bible. It will be well for us, therefore, if we can give a reason for the hope that is in us, and if we are encouraged to take up such a line of study of the Word of God as may help us to explain it to others, and to enjoy it more thoroughly ourselves.

It might, perhaps, naturally be expected that in trying to speak on such a subject as that before me I should make some allusion to the value of a knowledge of the original languages in which the Bible is written. Indeed when a sufficient knowledge of these languages is possessed, it is impossible to overrate it or say too much in its favour; but unless there be a well-balanced mind I fear we may apply here the poet's words, "A little learning is a dangerous thing." I do not recommend any one to obtain a mere smattering of Hebrew and Greek, because I believe that a smattering would do more harm than good, leading you perhaps to question the excellence of that version of the Scriptures which you might find yourselves in most respects utterly unable to mend. I would, therefore, address you this evening as those who use the English version of God's Scriptures, and who, when a difficulty presents itself, or when you desire to have light thrown on this or that passage, have recourse to a minister, or to some friend who is blessed with a better education than yourself.

Now, in the line of remark which I have to follow in speaking on the intelligent study of the English version of the Word of God, I shall group all that I have to say under two heads. First, let me exhort you in endeavouring to carry out an intelligent study of the Bible to get, if possible, a clear view of the purpose which God has made known in the Bible, and of the gradual development of that purpose. The Bible comes to us from God, as what? As a revelation of his grace to fallen man. Hence, with the exception of a very small portion of the commencement, and a very small portion of the close of the Bible, man is dealt with as fallen, and as destined to be restored to a better than his original position by the grace of Almighty God.

True, we have a glimpse of the joys of man after his restoration to God's favour hereafter; but it is only a glimpse, and, glorious as that glimpse may be, our business is to search and trace out the great process by which the ruin around us is to be repaired, and by which the decayed and disordered world is to be restored to order, harmony, and beauty; by which those who are now in rebellion against their God and King may be taught how to love, and how to worship, and how to adore and serve Him here, preparatory to being with Him for ever. Now, the Bible deals with man as fallen, and it comes to him in the shape of a revelation to fallen man concerning the things of the grace of God. No sooner does the Bible tells us of man's fall, and that, alas! is very early, than we feel the grace of God beginning to work. God's purpose is to make known his grace in Christ Jesus; and, man being fallen, God meets him at once with the assurance that "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." As if the more clearly to point out the particular quarter whence deliverance should arise, the particular stock from which He should spring, who was to be the repairer of the breach, we find that at the very time when Abraham was called, the promise was made to him that in his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed. Further on we find a still clearer development of the purpose of God. The channel in which Divine grace was to flow is marked out by the preference which God made of Isaac over Ishmael, of Jacob over Esau, of David over the line of Saul, and of Judah over Israel, after the grievous defection of the latter under Jeroboam. And then, again, we see gradually developed in the Old Testament Scriptures a mass of prophetic inspiration, which we understand by the light of the Gospel dispensation. Thus we discover that the great purpose of God in relation to fallen man was never lost sight of; that the Almighty ever had it in view; that throughout the various dispensations He was, to a greater or less extent, making all things subservient to his grand end, which was in the fulness of time to send forth his Son, who, being made of a woman, made under the law, was the Son of David, and sprung from the tribe of Judah. Now it is very important for us to see that this purpose of God appears on the pages of Scripture, and is gradually developed throughout the Old Testament; and for this reason, that if we see this clearly we shall understand our Lord's words, "Search the Scriptures, for they testify of me," and we shall understand the Apostle's assertion, "To Him give all the prophets witness." If we clearly trace this purpose of God, we shall find that all his dealings with men are so closely connected with Him who was "the seed of the woman," that Christ Jesus may be regarded in one sense as the great theme of the whole of the Scriptures from beginning to end; we observe how, as time passed, God made all things to subserve this grand design, which was to bring his only begotten Son into the world; how everything was made to assist in the accomplishment of that great end which had been from eternity in the councils of God. Let this suffice, then, for the first great object which I had in view, namely, to afford a clear view of the grand purpose of God in the Bible, and of the gradual development of that purpose, until the fulness of time was come.

The next point on which I wish to say a few words, is the connection which exists between the various books of Scripture. This is a point which is, I fear, overlooked to a very great extent by Bible readers. Now the Books of the Old Testament, comprising the Jewish history, may be grouped under these four heads or divisions:—first, the period extending from the origin of

the Jewish nation up to the end of its wanderings; secondly, the period of its settlement, under what may be termed the tribal order of things, when the tribes existed in a certain sense independently of one another, but all being under the guidance of God, or of a theocratic government; thirdly, the period of the monarchy; fourthly and lastly, the periods of their downfall, their captivity, and their restoration. We shall find that the books of the Old Testament Scriptures range themselves under these four distinct heads. As regards the first of these periods, that extending from the origin of the nation up to the end of its wanderings, we shall find that the Pentateuch was intended to give us the requisite inforformation. The second period, when the nation was settled in the tribal state of things, is embraced in the Books of Joshua, Ruth, Judges, and the early part of Samuel. The period of the monarchy is embraced by a portion of the Books of Samuel, the first and second Books of Kings, the first and second Books of Chronicles, the Psalms, the writings of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, the prophecies of Isaiah, the greater part of the prophecies of Jeremiah, the greater part of the prophecies of Ezekiel, and all the minor prophets with the exception of four. We now come to the last division to which I alluded, namely, that of the downfall, captivity, and restoration of the Jewish nation. The sacred history which belongs to that period we find in a portion of the Book of Jeremiah, in a portion of the Book of Ezekiel, in the Book of Daniel, in the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and the Book of Nehemiah.

Thus we have been through all the Old Testament books, with the exception of the Book of Job. That Book stands alone in the Old Testament; and I conceive that it was intended to give us the record of the dealings of the God of grace with man during the period of the patriarchal dispensation, as all the other books were intended to give us the record of God's dealings with man under the Mosaic dispensation, which followed the patriarchal. So that you see we have grouped the whole of the Old Testament Books under five distinct heads. Now as we read the Old Testament, what information we shall gather, what light we shall obtain with regard to God's dealings with man, if we keep these great heads or divisions before us. We shall not then read without a plan or system; then our references from one part of the Word of God to another will not be made simply for the sake of a word or of a sentiment, but rather with a view to illustrate history by prophecy, or prophecy by history; while on the other hand we shall see that the national or the individual mind among the Hebrew people expressed itself under the guidance of the teaching of the Holy Ghost, just in proportion as the people at large or the individual person sought His teaching.

And, then, passing from the Old Testament to the New, we find that the New Testament history groups itself under three great divisions, the historical, the doctrinal, and what are properly called the prophetical divisions; the historical division being embraced in the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, the more strictly doctrinal in the whole range of the Epistles, and the prophetical in the Apocalypse or the Revelation of St. John. I need not remind you what elucidation the Gospels receive from being brought to bear upon each other; nor how some of the statements in the Acts of the Apostles receive light from what we see in the pages of the Epistles, and how an allusion in the Epistles which we should not understand if it stood alone becomes clear when we turn to the Acts for the explanation. I need not tell you how much fresh interest is

I will make only one or two more remarks. One is, that I cannot conceive any parish being at all well administered without a Sunday school. I cannot conceive how there can be that union running through the whole parish, which is the very essence of the good working of the parochial system without a Sunday school. What is it that is to bring children and their parents, and the young people of the upper classes, and men hard-worked during the week, but who can spare some time on the Lord's Day—what is it that is to bring them altogether, to unite them in one common work, except union in the Sunday school? I am quite sure that those who have observed how young persons of the upper classes have been interested in their teaching in the Sunday school, what good it has done to their own souls, how it has brought them into intimate relations with the poor and with their pastors, will allow that if our parishes are to have a real union, extending through all ranks and all ages, there is hardly any means by which we can keep up this union except the Sunday school.

The other remark which I would make is this, that I think it is a matter for serious consideration to the busy part of our population, whether it be not their especial duty to have to do with Sunday schools. I have mentioned before, on public occasions, that I know two of the busiest men in England,—two men who hold almost the highest positions in the profession of the law,—each of whom has, for many years, spent a portion of his Sunday in teaching in his parish Sunday school. While the exigencies of business occupy them from early in the morning till late at night throughout the week, and the temptation is strong to spend Sunday in the country air, far away from the scenes of business and from the smoke and fatigue of town, they have thought it a sacred duty to remain in London on Sunday, that they might take part in the work of the parochial Sunday school. And what can be done by men who are oppressed with the greatest amount of professional labour, and whose names, if I were to mention them, would be recognised by every one as those of men at the very head of their profession, what can be done, I say, by them may be done by the busiest man in London. And there is no one who needs so much that sort of spiritual refreshment which the Sunday school gives as the man who is being busily engaged six days in the week in his ordinary secular avocations. The world is very apt to get such a hold on his heart, that he has little delight for things that are above the world. The more need is there, then, for him to prize every opportunity whereby the things of another life will be brought before him in their reality. And I know no way in which the reality of the things of another life may be better brought before a man than by his speaking to a little child as to his soul, and heaven, and the Lord Jesus. It is all very well to talk about the outside of religion, but when a man speaks to a little child whose very simplicity gives a sacredness to the deep things of religion, he must be a hypocrite indeed, if he does not feel in his heart what he is endeavouring to raise in the mind of the child. Thus to be brought face to face with an immortal soul, endeavouring to draw out what is good, and to lead that little child to the Lord and Saviour,—the man who is in that position once every week will certainly go back to the common occupations of the law or of trade freshened; he will carry with him into his ordinary business something of that higher atmosphere into which he has been brought in the presence of that child. I believe men will find that they have more time for giving themselves to this occupation than they suppose if they will only

grace. We are too apt, at times, to regard a child as a little plaything to gambol around us, a creature whose merry laugh is pleasant to the ear, and whose buoyant step is gladsome to the eye. We feel as though it were something intended to while away a tedious hour, and we listen to its lively prattle with satisfaction and pleasure. It may be all very well to indulge such feelings, but let us never forget that, with all its joyousness, with all its beauty, with all its buoyancy, it bears about it and within it that which contaminates and destroys its loveliness, namely, a heart "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked;" and our aim in the work of Sabbath school teaching should be to affect that heart, and to seek by the grace of God to infuse into the child right principles and holy affections, that thereby it may return to God's original intention in its creation, namely, the living to his glory and being a blessing to all around.

My friends, when you look at a little child, do not forget its peculiar characteristics; for if we are not aware of those characteristics, we may be inattentive to the responsible position which we hold in dealing with the child. Now, every observer of children must be perfectly aware that a child has in it a strong desire and tendency for imitation. Some one has called man an imitative animal, and I think it is a tolerably correct description of man in one point of view. Those who are acquainted with the peculiarities of children know how apt the young child is to ape the manners and fashions of its elders, and how it seeks to conform itself to their various habits. Now, my friends, if a child be imitative, what a tremendous responsibility does that impose upon the teacher to take care not, by any inconsistency in his life, to set before the child an example which he would be grieved to see it follow. We must remember that we are Sabbath-school teachers *out* of school as well as *in* school, and that little children's eyes are open to observe us wherever they may fall in with us. Hence I cannot well conceive how ladies who lead a worldly life, and devote themselves to worldly pleasure, can come on the Sabbath-day within the walls of our schools as teachers of "the truth as it is in Jesus." There is a discord between the woman in the school and the woman out of it: the child is quick enough to discern the difference, and depend upon it that its tendency will be, from its corrupt nature, to follow that which is evil rather than that which is good. But now, my friends, when you look at a child, which is the substance you have to deal with—the material you have to seek to fashion and mould,—never forget those solemn words of Christ, "Suffer the little children to come unto me." And the question which every one of us must propose to ourselves is this: Am I in any way—by want of energy, by want of zeal, by inconsistency of conduct, by a regardlessness of the necessity of preparation for my work—am I in any way hindering that child's drawing near to Christ? Above all, am I in any way hindering it, by indifference and coldness in my supplications to God on its behalf? Remember that if there is to be any success in our Sabbath-school teaching, it must be obtained through the Spirit of the living God; and if we desire that the Spirit may work in the midst of us, we must go to God and ask for it. I believe it would be a wise thing—I know it is the practice of some of my own teachers—for the teacher sometimes to take the child aside, kneel down with that child in simple, hearty prayer, and ask at God's hands that He would by His grace convert it. When, therefore, we have to deal with children, let us not merely sit in our chairs and teach them, let us not merely exhort them, but let us go upon our knees with them, and pray for them.

And then, again, when we look at a

little child, we must always remember, in order that we may be earnest in our work, that it can exert great influence. You know that every child must leave its seal on the generation in which it lives. No man passes through the world without making it either better or worse, however insignificant he may be; and if we teach the children in our Sabbath-schools aright, we send those little fellows and those little girls forth as missionaries to their little home-field. We send these little friends among their companions, among their careless parents, and they are instruments in God's hands in bringing them to a knowledge of that truth which they themselves enjoy. We should seek to influence the parents through the children, and we have the greatest encouragement to endeavour to do so.

One word in conclusion, for I must be brief to-night. I would rather our schools were called *Lord's Day* schools than Sunday-schools. I delight in keeping in view the Sabbath as the Lord's Day. Although it is the fashion to use the word Sunday, it never fits in very well with my tongue; and as the word "Sabbath" seems a little too Jewish for us, we want, I think, the really Christian title, "the Lord's Day." If we call it the Lord's Day, we shall always remember that it is the Lord's school that meets on that day; and that, therefore, if that school is to be inspected, it must be inspected by the Lord and not by man; if it is to have a grant to support it and keep it afloat, that grant must be the Lord's and not man's; it must be a larger pouring out of the Holy Spirit, a fuller growth of the grace from on high. If we keep this clearly in view, it will make us exceedingly minute and careful in our manner of teaching; we shall see that the doctrine taught is the very doctrine in which the Lord will approve; that the motive of the teaching is the motive which the Lord himself will countenance; we shall see that the schools are founded or conducted in honour of that Lord; that the rules and regulations are according to the mind and will of that Lord; and that the manual which we use—the Lord's manual—is chief and pre-eminent. And let us always bear in mind that whatever creed we may teach children, or whatever catechism we may teach them—and it is necessary to teach both creed and catechism—we have to show the children the foundation upon which they rest; we must show them that they are built upon the rock and not upon the sand; that they are the echo of God's word, and that it is because of that, that we ask children to accept and to believe them. And let us remember also, in regard to these Lord's Day schools, that they are to be nurseries for the Lord's Church. We are not to teach the children to suppose that the Sunday-school is sufficient, and that they have nothing more to think of on the Lord's Day, but we are to show them that Sunday-schools are but stepping-stones to enable them the better to comprehend the word read and the word preached in the sanctuary of the Most High. Now, my dear friends, I ask you to go back to your work with the remembrance of what I have said, though feebly, with regard to the little ones entrusted to your keeping; and I ask you to remember that the school, though it may be called the Sunday school, is in fact the Lord's Day school.

The Rev. THOMAS NOLAN said: In the few remarks which I have to make respecting the qualifications which are especially required in the Sunday-school teacher, though they do not in fact belong more to the Sunday-school teacher than to the individual Christian, I shall arrange what I have to say under two heads: First, soundness of doctrine; and, secondly, consistency of life.

It was my intention to show that the whole Bible, from beginning to end, speaks of Christ—that the spirit of

prophecy is the testimony of Jesus; but this has in fact been done this evening already. You have already been reminded that Jesus Christ is the burden, the theme of the entire Bible; the "seed of the woman" that was to "crush the serpent's head;" the seed of Abraham in whom "all the families of the earth" were to be "blessed;" the promised Shiloh unto whom all the gathering of the people must be; the prophet like unto Moses to be raised up; the star of Judah, the sceptre of Israel, the "desire of all nations," "the angel of the covenant" spoken of by the prophets. Looking back, and viewing the matter from another standpoint, we find that the theme is still the same. We see Jesus in the simplicity of the patriarchal narrative, Jesus in the complexity of the Mosaic ritual —for Moses wrote of Him—Jesus in the sublime strains of Isaiah, Jesus in the evangelists' history, Jesus in the closely-reasoned arguments of the Apostle Paul. Jesus is visible from beginning to end. My dear brethren, it is our bounden duty, more especially in these times, to view Jesus in the glory of His eternal Godhead, Jesus in the tenderness of His sympathising manhood, Jesus in the suffering of the remission for all sin, Jesus in the power of that atonement which reconciles God to man, Jesus in the prevalence of His intercession, Jesus in the glory of His kingdom at His coming. It is all Jesus from beginning to end; and if you would impress upon the susceptible minds and hearts of your class the great truth which it is so important for them to know and feel, you must have deeply impressed on your own minds and hearts the importance and the preciousness of those truths. This is a theme on which I would fain enlarge did time permit, or did I feel that there was a necessity for so doing.

But I pass rapidly to the remaining topic—consistency of life. I know you will bear with me if I speak with freedom on this point. I can sincerely say that I love and respect you for your work's sake; and I feel deeply grateful for the service rendered by my own trusty band of Sunday-school teachers, who every Sunday morning before they begin their work assemble with me for the reading of the word of God and for prayer. I am sure, therefore, you will bear with me if I tell you what you know already, but, nevertheless, what will bear repetition, that no matter how sound your doctrines may be, how clear your conceptions of truth, if they be not seconded by consistency of life, your teaching will be like sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. The child takes notice of any inconsistency more quickly than it takes notice of the opposite. Both teachers and parents are, then, bound to be watchful, not only over their actions, but even over their words, aye, and over their very looks and the very tones in which their words are uttered. It has been well said, with respect to the Sunday-school teacher, that although the child may not be able to understand your lesson, it will be able to understand yourself; and if there be inconsistency of practice it will certainly neutralise the correctness or value of the lesson taught. You are to witness for Christ; you are to show forth His praise who called you out of darkness into marvellous light; you are to be "the light of the world," "the salt of the earth." You are referred to in the word of God as "raised with Christ," as "sitting in heavenly places with Christ Jesus," as those who are to be brought again with Him in the day of His coming.

Another remark may not be out of place. I remember reading an account of a lecture delivered by Lord Palmerston, at Tiverton, to a body of young men, on "Success in this World," in which his lordship said that the great secret of his own success in life was that he always took pains. Now that was well worth remembering. If you

do not take pains as teachers the lessons will be pointless; you will be speaking at the truth or round about it, instead of coming point-blank at it, and the children will not be benefited. Teachers must consider and prepare their lessons at home, or else they can not expect a blessing at school. And then, remember that pains will be powerless unless strengthened and sanctified by prayer and by dependence on God. With effort there must be a constant acknowledgment that all effort is powerless without the grace of God. Then may you go forth trusting in God and anticipating His blessing. There are no doubt difficulties to be encountered in the work,—nothing can be done for God without difficulties,—but there is the promise that he who goeth forth bearing good seed shall return rejoicing, and bringing his sheaves with him.

After a few concluding remarks from the Rev. Ed. Auriol, who took the chair when it was vacated after his address by the Bishop of London, the Benediction was pronounced, and the meeting separated.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONFERENCE.

A Conference under the direction of the Church of England Sunday School Institute, was held on Friday evening, June 13th, at the Whittington Club, Arundel Street, Strand, at which a large number of Clergy, Superintendents, and Teachers were present. F. Norton, Esq., one of the Hon. Secretaries of the Institute, occupied the chair. The proceedings were commenced by the singing of a hymn and by prayer.

Three subjects were named for discussion: "*The real aim of the Sunday School System;*" "*The Comprehensive character of the Sunday School system,*" and "*The value of our Church Formularies as part of our Sunday School instruction.*" It was proposed that the first of these should be opened by the Rev. J. Bardsley, who, however, was prevented from fulfilling his engagement, when, at very short notice, the subject was kindly undertaken by

The Rev. J. H. Titcomb, M.A., St. Stephen's Stockwell, who observed that the System of Sunday School Instruction must be discussed theoretically, in considering its aim and purpose, and not practically: for while the system might be very good in itself, some defects in practice might mar its useful operation, which ought not to be charged to the system, but to those by whom it was applied. We must not look at any of these defects in practice, but assume for the moment, and for the sake of argument, that the system is perfect. What, then, ought the aim of it to be?—not the aim of the individual teachers working out the system, but the aim of the Sunday School system itself? We answer—to provide the Church of Christ with a means by which it may apply the life-giving and life-sustaining truth of God, committed to it, to the youngest of its members. The Church has been compared to the human body, and as the blood must needs be circulated throughout the whole body, even to its smallest members, to keep it in health and vigour, so the Scripture of Truth must be taken to the youngest child in the Church. It would be easy to follow out the parallel, by regarding the breath in the one as the type of the Holy Spirit in the other—and the varied and complicated organization of the body as analagous to the ecclesiastical system of the Church,—its sacraments, services, preaching, and other means for circulating the Divine life among its members.

Human agency is largely employed in this work by various means. District Visiting is one agency, the Sunday school is another. It is designed to enable the Church to do its duty to the youngest and tenderest members of its body. The Day school does not meet the case, for the work to be done is of a different nature; it is not the acquisition of knowledge, but the imparting of spiritual life; hence Sunday school teachers are chiefly selected for their piety, not for their learning. The time chosen is the Lord's day, and thus the Sabbath is honoured, and the duty of public worship is enforced. The Church of England fits together all its agencies in carrying on its work. Baptism brings the infant to Christ; the Sunday school instructs him in the truth of the Gospel; Confirmation calls upon him to ratify the covenant of grace in his own person, and he is then admitted to full membership and the Holy Communion. It is not a valid objection to this view of the system that practically the Sunday school only reaches the poorer part of the members of the Church, for none of those in a higher position are excluded; and if it be limited in its application, it is not the fault of the system, but of those who do not employ it more extensively. But it must not to overlooked that, in carrying out this work, the agents employed ought to use spiritual means, since their object is to circulate the Divine life through the smallest members of the body ecclesiastical. The Sunday school system is not, as some would have it, a necessary evil, designed to counteract the neglect of parents in instructing their children, but a necessary good—for without it no parish and no minister can do for the young what its other agencies of public preaching and district visiting accomplish for its older members. Our Sunday schools keep alive the truth, and carry it on to generations to come.

In the discussion which followed, a SUPERINTENDENT pointed out an essential difference between the character of the Day school and the Sunday school—that the latter was entirely a work of love, a part of the plan of bringing power to those below them. Mr. SANDBY advocated the application of the system to the *whole* of the younger members of the Church, not simply to the teaching of the children of the poor, but of the classes above them in society, to whom the kind of instruction given in the Sunday school would be equally valuable. Mr. FLEET observed that there was no antagonism between the Day School and the Sunday school—they might and should work side by side, and the continued improvement of the one would never supersede the necessity for the other. The Rev. H. T. ADAMSON, St. Andrew's, Holborn, testified to the value of the Sunday school as a means of feeding the lambs of Christ's flock. It helped the clergy to do this most effectually; for when they assembled the whole school together, as a class, to declare God's truth to them, they found the children able to receive and understand it by the preparatory instruction they had received from their teachers, who plant that the ministers may afterwards water. A TEACHER present considered the aim of the Sunday school system to be, to supply the religious teaching which parents could not, in the case of the poor, themselves impart to their children; and another TEACHER suggested that parents were thus led to Church, and to become acquainted with their duties; and if the system were extended to the middle classes, they, after being taught in the school, would afterwards become better fitted to teach the children of the poor.

II. The next topic was opened by J. G. FLEET, Esq., Hon. Sec. of the Sunday School Institute, who read the following Paper on

The Comprehensive Character of the Sunday School.

The well-known maxim of political economy that division of labour is one great and important cause of success is not without its application to religious enterprises. The end in view in all such enterprises is, indeed, so thoroughly one, viz., the salvation of man, that it might at first appear to throw the means employed beyond the application of the maxim I have quoted,—but when we come to reflect on the many and varied avenues through which the soul of man may be approached we cease to insist on efforts being made only in one direction. Complaints are often made that our religious societies multiply unreasonably, and it might not be easy in every case to justify the formation of a new one, but, on the other hand, none will now dispute the happy results of our having combined in various distinct associations to carry on works, yet so kindred in their aim as the Missionary, the Scripture, the Visitation, and the Educational Agencies.

And one further remark may be permitted, in preparation for the express topic of this paper, that our sympathy and active support, so justly claimed by all such Societies, is doubly due where the one in question can be shown to have a direct and powerful influence for good on all its kindred associations.

A Sunday school teacher for nearly thirty years may be forgiven for observing, with even a proud loyalty to the cause, that it would be difficult to name any other kind of Christian effort more directly necessary for the general welfare of the Church of God than the Sunday school, or one whose prosperity in the fullest sense would more immediately conduce to the like prosperity in all the rest. Give us but Sunday schools where the simple truths of the Gospel are taught, and (by Divine aid) with success, and it is thence that our ministry will receive its best pastors, and our missionary societies their worthiest ambassadors. The value of the division of labour may well be confirmed by the evident benefits that follow whenever the Sunday school is treated as an independent and important agency, instead of being slurred over, or tacked on to other work; and, on the other hand, my second remark will equally be justified by the proof that would thus be afforded of the comprehensive character of the Sunday school, in that it would be seen to feed (as it were) all the other channels of Christian effort.

From the fact that the papers to be read at this Conference are intended to be rather suggestive of conversation than finished statements, I am led to pass on to the next point; and to observe that the Sunday school is not only in a wide sense comprehensive and Catholic, but that in several detailed particulars it earns the same praise.

It is comprehensive in the OBJECTS of its care. No longer confined to the ragged outcasts that moved Raikes' heart, and roused his mind, it reaches out on the right hand and on the left. Wherever the system is properly worked (and I have a right to take it at its best when faults of execution are evidently no part of the theory) there, none are repelled as unfit objects. Infants are cared for with tender love, and growing youths are watched over and ceaselessly followed by true sympathy and wise plans. The poor are welcomed, the respectable received with gladness, and even the upper classes invited to receive the Scriptural teaching of which all stand in need.

Are the children already well taught? They form the solid strength of the attendance,—are they vicious, ignorant, irregular? Their welfare is sought with a perseverance, a patient watchfulness, a pity akin to love, such as God has blessed times without number. Our Sunday schools receive the little ones who can only lisp their Saviour's praise, and in them may also be found

thousands who have grown up to maturity, and who, in passing through dangers and difficulties, find a welcome aid in the influence of a pious teacher. What other organization reaches thus widely?

The Sunday school again is comprehensive in the AGENTS it employs. One of its greatest elements of success is its very apparent weakness—the need of numerous workers to carry it on. The pressure of this need has led, in countless instances, to the call, "Come and help us," and in obedience it is not too much to say, that hundreds of thousands of young Christians, who might otherwise have done but little for the cause of God, have been led to devote themselves to a work which has enlisted their sympathies, satisfied their judgment, and richly rewarded their labours. Nor need I imply that the young alone are drawn into the work. Visit our Sunday schools and you will find there representatives from every rank, and of all ages—some whose daily cares are closely connected with the highest affairs of the kingdom—some of the humblest labourers for their daily bread: some whose powers of intellect have placed them high in fame, others whose gifts extend not beyond the simplest perception and the most meagre education. And when Christians of such very varied endowments can all meet on this common ground, and can all find in the Sunday school a pleasant and profitable scene of occupation, there must needs be in such work a character of comprehensiveness worthy our high respect.

And, in the last place, what of the MEANS by which the great end in view is sought? Is there aught of monotony—aught of tameness—aught of mental poverty—or of narrow-minded isolation? It is enough to say, in answer to such reproachful charges, that he who faithfully uses the Holy Scriptures as his text book, and avails himself of their varied resources, can never be justly charged with either narrow-mindedness or tiring repetition. None who have studied that Holy Volume aright can have failed to be struck with the wonderful variety of the modes in which truth is set forth and enforced. On this I need not enlarge, in such an assembly: it is enough to remind you that the most gifted writers in the world have been and ever will be (consciously or not) indebted to the Bible for their most brilliant thoughts and most eloquent language. And the treasures whence they drew their riches are at our disposal! It is one privilege of our work that in it we are necessarily led to turn continually to that storehouse! "There is none like it!" And combined with this invaluable blessing come others of great importance. Not only does the faithful teacher endeavour to apply to his charge the truths contained in the Word of God, but the Sunday school comprehends within the list of its attractions others, which though inferior because human, can yet find few elsewhere to compete with them. The child that falls under the care of a pious, devoted, and painstaking teacher, has, in addition to that Holy Volume, the precious influence of Christian friendship of a high and pure character. The care, the counsels, the prayers, the aid of a friend like that, are blessings of no slight value. Where a Sunday school is managed as it should be, and often is, a thousand varied influences surround its happy inmates, and urge them onward to a heavenly home; and though they may have much to disturb and harass them, still in their school experience they are laying up a store of pleasant and profitable recollections, to which they will assuredly turn, through life, and in the hour of death. Who will venture to say how many will bless God, to all eternity, for the comprehensive character of that system which reached *them*?

The discussion on this subject was commenced by the Rev. GEORGE ALLEN,

of St. Thomas', Islington, who put the question, Ought or ought not the Sunday School system to be extended to the upper classes? He considered that the Sunday School was not simply an expedient to meet the neglect of parents in the religious teaching of their children, but a bounden duty on the part of the Church towards its members. The children of the middle and upper classes are as much in need of the kind of teaching given in the Sunday school as those of the poor,—the same reason—a want of interest in and feeling for religion,—operating as the principal motive for the neglect of the duty in the parents of all classes. Every clergyman's experience in examining candidates for confirmation showed the lamentable deficiency among the middle and upper classes in this respect—few of them understanding as clearly as our ordinary Sunday scholars, the essential doctrines of justification and sanctification. The extension of the Sunday school to such persons can be done, for an experiment was made in Islington twelve years ago, when a private school was engaged for the purpose, which has continued ever since, and now numbers 140 such persons—many of the elder ones, gentlemen's sons, remaining to the age of twenty-one or twenty-two, and many of those once attending it as scholars, being now ordained ministers. Among Dissenters no distinction of rank is made among Sunday scholars, and if such schools are indeed to be "the nurseries of the Church," there can be no reason why any such line should be drawn among ourselves. Mr. J. F. REID corroborated Mr. Allen's testimony by his personal knowledge of the school to which he referred, and observed that the necessity for extending the boundaries of the Sunday school arose not only from the unwillingness of parents to teach their children at home, in the same manner, but from their not knowing how it should be done. Mr. FLEET explained the plan adopted in the parish in which he resides, where the children of the gentry are taught in the Church, on the plan of the Sunday school; he said that he sent his own children to that school, because there was a class system adopted which could not be introduced at home, with children of different ages, and they were stimulated by the gathering of many together, and by the mode in which they were instructed. The Rev. Mr. MARTIN referred to Dr. Chalmers' opinion as to the necessity of bringing all the children of the congregation under the system of instruction adopted in the Sunday school, as the only sure way of grounding them in the truth.

The Rev. T. P. HOLDITCH, M.A. (St. James', Kensington) enquired how such classes could be formed?

Rev. G. ALLEN explained that, in the case to which he had referred, a few were first asked to join a Bible class to be held in a separate room, and it was afterwards announced that a class met there every Sunday, and others quickly joined it.

A TEACHER advocated their being taught in the same room, or even in the same classes with the other children, and

Another TEACHER supported the suggestion, since all are equal in God's sight, and it might have a mutual influence for good both on rich and poor. He also urged the clergy to give all encouragement to Sunday school teachers in their work, since, in fact, they were the delegates of the ordained ministers to the children of their flock.

The Rev. S. THORNTON, M.A. (St. Jude's, Whitechapel), said he could better lose any other agency of usefulness in his parish than the Sunday school, for it gave him comfort and strength for his work whenever he entered it. He regarded it not as an accessory, but as a radical and indispen-

sable branch of the Christian system, to be employed by the Church in giving its witness to the world. The Sunday school teacher takes his specific part and occupies a distinct position, in carrying on the work of the Church. It would be well if the same systematic teaching of Scripture could be applied to adults, by means of a congregational Bible Class, for the catechetical system is the best for imparting sound Scriptural teaching. The Sunday school teacher is God's minister to his class —a thought which shows both the responsibility and the blessedness of those so engaged.

Mr. HEALD referred to the value of the Sunday school as a means of retaining elder boys who, after they begin work, are the most difficult for the clergy to keep under their control. Teachers who seem to think the clergy do not give them sufficient support, ought sometimes to look at their own unwillingness at times to bear the direction and control of the clergy in their work.

Mr. NORTON, referring to the enquiry as to how to begin a Middle Class School, suggested that if we would first place our own younger brothers or sisters in the class, others would soon follow the example.

III. The third subject was opened by the Rev. J. HASLEGRAVE M.A. (St. Peter's Islington), who spoke as follows on

"*The value of our Church formularies as part of our Sunday School Instruction.*"

The Sunday school teacher has his vocation and ministry only second in importance to the ordained ministry of the Word,—he is a fellow helper, an instructor of babes, a teacher of the young. The teaching of the Sunday school is limited to the truths of God. The Bible is the great book of instruction Out of it, in accordance with it, must all the lessons be delivered. But it will be felt at once that helps are not only important, but necessary; and hence whatever variety of religious opinion may exist among men, all have agreed in the value of catechisms, or selections of subjects with which to interest and instruct the young. That very variety of religious opinion, oftentimes most wide apart, diametrically opposed even on fundamental questions, necessitates a *form of sound words* in any church that would be and continue to be sound in the faith. On this account the value to our Sunday school teachers of the formularies of our church, cannot be over estimated whether viewed in themselves, or in their use.

1. Viewed as a standard of Scriptural truth, how valuable they are!

The Bible is and ever has been claimed, however unjustly, by every sect, even by such whether ancient or modern as have widely departed from its teaching. The Arch-deceiver could quote Scripture. It is the unlearned—or rather as the word signifies, the *unteachable* and the unstable—who wrest the Scripture to their own destruction. There must be a right as there will be a wrong interpretation of Scripture, and the right interpretation is the symbol, the watchword, the standard of a faithful church.

Peter's confession—"I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," the first creed of the Christian church, was the test of truth against the perversions of the Old Testament Scriptures by the unbelieving Jews. The Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds—were enlargements or rather expositions of that fundamental article to meet the growing heresies of those days.

Our Te Deum, which is at once a profession of faith and an anthem of praise, echoes the same truths. Our whole Service-book—from the very first that introduces into communion with the church on earth, to the last which opens into view the communion of the blest—our daily and our Sunday services—our commemoration services,

all are in harmony each with the other, and all with the Bible. That I am not blinded by loving attachment to the church in saying this, it is enough to add that the most distinguish Nonconformists have said the same, when declaring as did Robert Hall, that "it ranked the highest among human compositions."

2. But not simply as viewed in their orthodoxy or conformity to Scripture, but also in their catholicity and comprehensiveness may we estimate the formularies of the church.

They breathe not one word of sectarianism. There is nothing in them or about them, that speaks with the narrow-mindedness or selfishness of a mere denomination. They have no party shibboleth. The Articles are not (as some would have them) merely articles of peace, but of that peace only which is first pure, sound in doctrine, the basis of Christian fellowship. Neither are they, as some would desire to see them, so latitudinarian as only to constitute a barrier against atheism; faithful to the Bible, they enunciate its great truths, and enter protest against all opposing error. Universality—but the universality of the Church of Christ, whose faith is one—is the grand characteristic of her doctrines and worship. Their object is to produce a deep faith in *Christ*, not as the miserable address to Dissenting Sunday schools lately issued from the "Liberation Society," says a "deep faith *in Dissent*." The standard is the standard of the cross: the Common Prayer is the common prayer of redeemed sinners wherever they are to be found.

Now, in teaching formularies like these, you are teaching not the peculiarity of this or that denomination, but the faith of the universal Church, preparing the young, wherever in the wide world his lot may be cast, to live and to act as one of the blessed company of all faithful people, enjoying the privileges and discharging the obligations of his baptismal standing, till, in the land of immortality, he takes his place in the Church of the Redeemed.

Now, with such formularies, excluding all sectarianism on the one hand, and all latitudinarianism on the other, the Church of England offers advantages to her Sunday school teachers which should be made the most of in all our Sunday schools. Study and teach the ancient Creeds of the Christian Church —not Popish, for they were *before* Popery, and condemnatory of the Pope's Creed—not denominational, for they oppose and condemn anti-Christian error. Let children be well grounded in them, and each of their Articles compared with and established by Scripture, remembering that the Church enjoins that they are to be received *only* because they are the summary of Scripture; and it will not be easy for the heretical additions of the Pope's Creed, or the creedless antagonism of other opponents, to shake their adherence to the faith once delivered to the saints.

I would suggest, also, that the Articles should be lodged in the memories and explained to the understanding of the elder children. Those Articles, under God, have preserved the Church faithful against all the assaults of false brethren within, and open enemies without. The cry against Articles of faith, and subscription to Articles, proclaims its parentage and speaks its nature. But the very cry proves their necessity and their value. Let the appalling fact of the hundreds of chapels built and endowed, which some of the best and holiest of men once possessed, and in which they once preached, being now held by Socinians, and doctrines preached there that deny the Godhead and reject the atoning sacrifice of the Saviour, bear witness. Let the fact, which our courts of law can declare, of the Nonconformists themselves deeming it right, for the sake of protection, or, in

other words, for perpetuating their dogmatic teaching, to insert the doctrinal articles of the Established Church in the Trust Deeds of their chapels, bear witness.

Now, if the value of such Articles of faith be thus attested, if they are of such importance to the preservation of any given Church, then must it not be of eminent use to lodge them in the memory of the young, to explain, and to indoctrinate the elder children in the schools, both with their Scriptural excellency, their accordance with the Bible, and their great practical use?

The Liturgical Services offer another advantage, which should make them more than they are the text-book in our Sunday schools. Let the arrangement of the ecclesiastical year be followed, and a sounder, fuller, and more essential body of divinity cannot possibly be treasured up in the mind. It was beautifully remarked by the late Mr. Watson, a distinguished minister of the Wesleyan body, that "attendants in our churches (and, I may add, scholars in our schools) have this great advantage, that they have imbibed a form of sound words in readiness for the touch of the life-giving Spirit. The wood is laid upon the altar, it only requires the Spirit to consume the sacrifice."

The Catechism is obviously intended by the Church of England for those of her children who, in infancy, were admitted into the Church of Christ by His own appointed ordinance of Baptism.

Its subject-matter of instruction is in reference to the covenant of grace signed and sealed in baptism, or, in other words, it divides itself into baptismal privileges and baptismal obligations,—what God, in the riches of his grace, has done for us, signified, certified, and assured in baptism, and what, as the effect, we are called upon to do in our relation to Him as his faithful soldiers and servants to our lives' end.

The Catechism, thus properly understood and taught, exhibits the light in which the Church, in all her services, represents the children of her charge. Taught by Scripture, she holds, without exception, that man is a fallen, guilty, and corrupt creature, born in sin, and a child of wrath. This is the first principle of truth, distressing in itself, but necessary to the understanding of the second great principle, *viz.*, the new birth, called in Scripture the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, manifestly in reference to baptism, which baptism, in another place, is said to save us "not the putting away the filth of the flesh," not the outward and visible sign alone, but the inward and spiritual grace, and "the answer of a good conscience towards God."

This important doctrine pervades the whole spirit of the formularies, from the Baptismal service to the instruction laid down for the Visitation of the Sick.

Understanding the baptismal covenant, as taught in the Church Catechism, and set forth in the devotional formularies of the Church, there is the greatest encouragement in the work of training the young. You begin with grace, and it is hopeless to attempt any other principle. You teach the child the character of God as a Father; you show the love of Jesus to it; you tell the child what God has promised to it, that He will be a Father, Jesus will be a Saviour, and the Spirit a Sanctifier. You then teach it its own obligations and duties—what the solemn vow, promises, and professions of its baptism mean—what it is to be a member of Christ. A certified state of salvation is the strongest argument for the acceptance of salvation. Mercies beget gratitude, and love wins the heart, and to awaken in the tender mind the wakings of filial affection, the first thing is to teach the child, as soon as it can learn, the promise which fits for

every duty, the privileges which demand obedience.

And this is the teaching of our Catechism,—God's promise to us, certified and sealed in baptism, the basis of our promise to Him; God's grace given to us disposing and strengthening for service to Him.

From the baptismal covenant we pass next to the service of Confirmation. On this point I fear there is a too great neglect in the system of our Sunday school teaching and consequently an advantage of no slight value lost sight of. The Catechism is compiled especially with a view to due preparation of the baptised infant, as it grows to years of responsibility, to ratify the baptismal covenant. The peculiar advantage which this service furnishes in right moral training is this, that it gives the opportunity of dealing pointedly and expressly with the child's soul. You will shew it the real spiritual nature of the service—that it supposes and requires that it be a heart service—that the inward and the spiritual grace of which water in baptism was the outward and visible sign, is really possessed. You are to make the subject of repentance, faith, and obedience the one lesson of instruction and inquiry. You are to show them that baptism will be of no avail unless there be the answer of a good conscience as to the reality of grace in the heart, and holiness in the life.

It would be well if a class of the elder scholars in our Sunday schools were formed into what might be termed a Confirmation class, for I cannot doubt the great advantage of such explaining and applying of the formularies at this interesting period—the period of impression and of temptation, of decision for eternity.

Then subsequent to this and consequent upon it, I may lastly say one word on what, perhaps, wholly escapes distinct teaching in our Sunday schools, and yet should not. I refer to the Sacrament of *the Lord's Supper*.

Probably more than the simple theory cannot be taught in the schools, on account of the elder scholars leaving, but I would suggest whether some arrangement might not be made by which the serious, thoughtful youth might be kept in connection with the teacher, and that this subject might form one distinct branch of their instruction. Certainly they ought not to be lost sight of till, one by one, they are added to the number of regular, devout, and habitual attendants at the Lord's Table.

Here I pause—only remarking that the more we study the Bible, verily I do believe the more we shall admire and love the Prayer Book; and the more we teach the Bible by the aid of that sound exposition given in the Church's formularies, the more we shall at the same time be building men up in their most holy faith, and strengthening an attachment to the Church of our forefathers, making men loyal subjects of their Queen, and faithful servants of Him who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

In the conversation which followed upon Mr. Haslegrave's address, a TEACHER noticed the value of the Liturgy, as connecting the Sunday school with the Church, and Mr. SANDBY pointed out the advantages which Teachers possessed in having so wonderful a composition to use as a help in their work, showing how every Collect was pregnant with meaning, every sentence employed so concise and clear that it could descend to the capacity of the youngest child, and satisfy the intellect of the most cultivated mind: while in the course of teaching given in the appointed services of the Church, the Teacher had the advantage of being supplied with the means of "setting forth in order" the great truths of the Gospel, so that they might be rightly understood by their scholars. The Rev. T. P. HOLDITCH recommended

the use of 'the Liturgy compared with the Bible' and other books as valuable to the Teacher; and the Rev. J. H. TITCOMB, while agreeing with all that had been said, as to the value of the formularies of the Church, thought it right to warn all of the necessity for keeping the Liturgy in its right place, and never to forget that the Bible is pre-eminently the text-book for the Sunday school. The Prayer Book is not only of value to the teacher in his work, but also as a means of instruction to the child—for it contains, clearly and rightly expressed, both the declaration of the dogmas of religion, and also the best forms of spiritual devotion. The former is especially needed in these days of negative theology, for (to use an illustration from chemistry) while the Bible gives Divine truth as it were in solution, in the Prayer Book it is precipitated and condensed. Creeds will illustrate *positive* faith, even as the collects and the services will teach children to pray, and illustrate *positive* devotion: thus engaging both the heart and mind in the service of God.

The Rev. S. THORNTON expressed his satisfaction that the subject had been brought under discussion, for he felt that the Sunday school teacher had much to do before he could educate the children *up to* the formularies, and *up to* the services of the Church, so that they might really understand, appreciate, and adopt them. Knowing how wearily so many young people dragged through the period of the Church service, rejoicing at its close, he felt sure that only *Separate Services* for young children would remedy the evil, not by putting aside the Liturgy, but by curtailing and simplifying it, that it might be brought within their comprehension. He wished the Sunday school Institute would prepare such a form for Separate Services, as he was sure it would be most useful, preparatory to taking children to the more complete service of the Church.

The CHAIRMAN having summed up, the meeting was closed by the singing of a Hymn and the Benediction.

QUARTERLY RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

HAVING separately reported the ANNUAL MEETING of the Society, and the CONFERENCE which was held in London, especially with the view to bring the subject of Sunday school work before teachers from the country, who might be attracted to the Metropolis by the International Exhibition, and also elsewhere referred to, the Conference held at GUILDFORD, we have only here to record that a series of three

TRAINING LESSONS

were given by Messrs. REID, NORTON, and MAUDE, as members of the Committee, at the school-room of St. John the Evangelist, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, on Friday evenings, 23rd and 30th of May, and 6th of June, at each of which a large number of teachers from that and adjoining schools was present. The chair was occupied on each occasion by the Rev. James Moorhouse, M.A., the Incumbent, who took great interest in the proceedings.

A SERIES OF TRAINING LESSONS, &c., have been arranged for delivery at the Rooms of the Institute as follows:—

Thursday, June 12. Testament Class. John i. 35—42. Mr. S. B. POWER.

Thursday, June 19. Class for preparing Notes for a Lesson.

Thursday, June 26. Lesson from Notes so prepared. By Mr. F. NORTON.

The above have taken place. The following will (D.V.) be given in continuation of the series:—

Thursday, July 10. Elementary Class. 2 Kings v. 1—14. Mr. REID.

Thursday, July 17. Bible Class. Ps. cvii. Mr. FLEET.

Thursday, July 24. Bible Class (*for Ladies only*). On "Justification."

Thursday, July 31. Testament Class (*for Ladies only*). On "The Lord's Prayer."

The above meetings commence at half-past seven o'clock, except the Ladies' Classes, which begin at half-past six.

THE DEVOTIONAL MEETING

for the present quarter will be held on Thursday evening, the 3rd of July, conducted by the Rev. E. AURIOL, M.A., to commence at half-past eight o'clock.

A CONVERSATIONAL MEETING,

to discuss "Sunday School Management," will be held on Thursday evening, the 7th of August, to commence at half-past seven o'clock.

A SERIES OF LECTURES

to Junior Teachers and Senior Scholars will be given as follows:—

August 14th. "Why am I a Churchman?" Mr. F. NORTON.

August 21st. "Knowledge the Handmaid of Religion." Mr. G. A. T. HILL.

August 28th. "A Blade of Grass, and its teachings." Mr. HARTNELL.

Sept. 4th. Subject not fixed.

Sept. 11th. "The Crusades." Mr. MILLS.

Sept. 18th. Subject not fixed.

Sept. 25th. "Money." Mr. S. B. POWER.

Special tickets will be issued as usual for the scholars, but junior teachers will be admitted on presenting their Member's card.

The Committee have great pleasure in placing

THE READING ROOM

of the Institute at the disposal of Teachers from the country visiting London during the ensuing summer and autumn, when furnished with a note of introduction from the clergyman or superintendent of the school to which they belong; and the officials of the Institute will be happy to render them any information in relation to the work in which they are engaged, or which may be of service to them, as strangers in the Metropolis.

THE FUNDS

of the Society have received the following additions during the past quarter:—

NEW ANNUAL SUBSCRIBERS.

T. B. Horsfall, Esq., M.P.	1	1	0
Rev. J. Thomas	0	10	6
F. W. Hill, Esq.	0	5	0
R. A. Gorell, Esq.	0	10	6
Miss C. Sweeting	0	5	0
G. A. T. Hill, Esq.	0	5	0

COLLECTING CARD.

Miss Whittle	0	1	0

DONATIONS.

J. E. Liberty, Esq.	0	10	6
J. H. Jones, Esq.	2	0	0
Rev. E. Maxwell	0	10	0

NEW SUBSCRIBING SCHOOLS.

Penwerris Sunday School	0	10	6
St. Paul's (Girls'), Jersey	0	10	6
Alderley Edge	0	10	6

The Committee trust the friends of the Society will not forget that the

SPECIAL FUND

is yet far from completed, and that nearly *five hundred pounds* remain to be collected before the financial position of the Institute will be such as to free the Committee from anxiety and embarrassment, and to secure the future success of its operations in promoting the good work of efficient Sunday school teaching in connection with the Church of England. It is, therefore hoped, that those teachers who have derived help from the publications or meetings of the Society will do what they can to obtain, from the friends of religious education, the support which the Institute may reasonably claim.

Notices of Books.

A PARAPHRASE of the BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH, by the Rev. J. C. WHISH, M.A. (Seeleys pp. 218), is an endeavour carried out, as we think, successfully to aid the reader of the English version of this sacred Book, by keeping as much as possible to the accurate rendering of the original, making such verbal additions as may render the meaning more evident. The author has given his authorities for all the readings which differ from the authorised one, and has brought to his aid the light which other parts of Scripture and subsequent historical fulfilments of many of the predictions, have thrown upon this portion of the inspired Word. A very important principle of interpretion is laid down, and illustrated, that "the prophecy must have been intelligible to, and have had some practical instruction for, that generation, to whom it was first uttered," although the spiritual sense is for the instruction of the whole Church in every generation; and this little volume is likely to prove a most useful addition to the many which have been written to guide the Christian to the right understanding of this most precious of the ancient Jewish prophecies.

The Religious Tract Society have recently published the first volume, in Demy 8vo. (pp. 476), of a New Edition of the WORKS of JOHN HOWE, M.A., one of the most eminent of the English Puritan divines,—a man of great devotion and spirituality, combined with general learning, and classical and Hebrew scholarship. The peculiarities of his style, often elaborate and involved, combined with a want of system in punctuation, have deterred many from searching in his writings, for the rich mine of thought which they contain. In the present finely printed (yet not expensive) edition of his works, under the careful editorship of Henry Rogers, many of the external defects have been removed, by the mode in which the work is printed, while no alteration has been made in the substance of the text itself. The first volume is chiefly occupied by Howe's elaborate and masterly treatise on "The Blessedness of the Righteous." We shall look forward with interest to the appearance of the remaining volumes, and to the Life of the Author, by the editor, which is to follow; for we feel that the Society is rendering good service by undertaking thus to promote the study of such a sound and useful body of divinity as is contained in the works of good John Howe.

MORAL WASTES, and how to reclaim them: by Rev. J. Wilson, 12mo. pp. 106. Partridge, Paternoster Row. This is an account of a series of efforts made to reclaim one of the worst spots in Aberdeen: and is another testimony to the power of the gospel and the value of special efforts, dictated by something of the spirit of Him who came to save the lost, the fallen, and the polluted.

Notices to Correspondents.

We beg to draw the especial attention of our readers to the admirable Speeches and Addresses delivered at the Annual Meeting of our Society.

Communications are acknowledged, with thanks, from H.; Rev. G. N. S.; W. S.; Dora; I. M. C.; Rana.; Rev. H. J. B.

The insertion of the Paper on "Sunday School Addresses" is unavoidably deferred till the next Number.

It is requested that Articles intended for insertion in the next Number may be sent to the Editors not later than the last week in August.

Church of England

SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY

MAGAZINE.

1ST OCTOBER, 1862.

The Teacher in his Closet.

A HANDFUL OF CORN FROM OLD FIELDS.

ANGELS.

For aught we know, this spot, with the few sinners on it, bears no greater proportion to the universe of intelligences, than a dungeon doth to a kingdom. It seems we are led not only by revelation but by common sense, observing and inferring from the analogy of visible things, to conclude there are innumerable orders of intelligent beings, more happy and more perfect than man, whose life is but a span, and whose place upon this earthly globe is but a point in respect of the whole system of God's creation. We are dazzled indeed with the glory and grandeur of things here below, because we know no better. But I am apt to think, if we knew what it was to be an angel for one hour, we should return to this world, though it were to sit on the brightest throne on it, with vastly more loathing and reluctance, than we would now descend into a loathsome dungeon or sepulchre.

Bishop Berkeley.

How charming the thought that the spirits in bliss
Will bow their bright wings to a world such as this;
Will leave the sweet songs of the mansions above,
To breath o'er our bosoms some message of love.
They come, on the wings of the morning they come,
Impatient to lead some poor wanderer home,
Some pilgrim to snatch from this stormy abode,
And lay him to rest in the arms of his God.

Cunningham.

THE ancient Hebrews called it—the Resurrection body—the angelic clothing of the soul.

Cudworth's "Intellectual System."

IT cannot be said God does not need angels, therefore angels do not exist; for God does not need man, and yet he exists.

C. Taylor.

Nor think, tho' men were none,
That heaven would want spectators, God want praise.
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep;
All these with ceaseless praise His work behold,
Both day and night. How often from the steep
Of echoing hill, or thickets, have we heard
Celestial voices, to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive to each other's note,
Singing their great Creator. Oft in bands
While they kept watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds,
In full harmonic numbers joined, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heaven.

Paradise Lost.

THE starry heaven is but, as it were, the floor or pavement of a heaven above it, the supremest or highest heaven, which is by consent of nations the place of the Almighty's most special presence; all men by a kind of natural instinct, with minds, eyes, and hands, lifted up, directing thither their prayers to God; and can we fancy that the universal King hath no servants to wait on Him, in His presence chamber, when we see so many paying their devotions to Him at so great a distance here below? Natural reason, therefore, directs and leads us to an acknowledgment that there are certain intelligent creatures in the upper world, who, as they are more remote from the dregs of matter, wherein we are immersed, so they are of a more pure, refined and excellent substance, and as far exceeding us in their way of understanding and glorifying the

supreme God, as they are of nearer admission to the place where His glory is in the most especial manner manifested; and these are they who in our sacred writings are known by the name of Angels.

Swinnocke, 1673.

THE PILGRIMS OF THE NIGHT.

Hark! hark! my soul, angelic songs are swelling,
O'er earth's green fields and ocean's wave-beat shore;
How sweet the truth those blessed strains are telling
Of that new life when sin shall be no more;
Angels of Jesus, angels of light,
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night.

Darker than night, life's shadows fall around us,
And like benighted men, we miss our mark;
God hides Himself, and grace hath scarcely found us,
Ere death finds out his victims in the dark;
Angels of Jesus, angels of light,
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night.

Onward we go, for still we hear them singing,
Come, weary souls, for Jesus bids you come;
And through the dark, its echoes sweetly ringing,
The music of the Gospel leads us home;
Angels of Jesus, angels of light,
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night.

Far, far away, like bells of evening pealing,
The voice of Jesus sounds o'er land and sea;
And laden souls, by thousands meekly stealing,
Kind Shepherd, turn their weary steps to Thee;
Angels of Jesus, angels of light
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night.

Rest comes at length; though life be long and dreary,
The day must dawn, and darksome night be past;
All journeys end in welcome to the weary,
And heaven, the heart's true home, will come at last;
Angels of Jesus, angels of light,
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night.

Cheer up, my soul, faith's moon-beams softly glisten
Upon the breast of life's most troubled sea;
And it will cheer thy drooping heart to listen
To those brave songs which angels sing for thee;
Angels of Jesus, angels of light,
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night.

Angels, sing on, your faithful watches keeping,
Sing us sweet fragments of the song above;
While we toil on, and soothe ourselves with weeping,
Till life's long night shall break in endless love;
Angels of Jesus, angels of light,
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night.

If Saul thought the honour too much which was given to David by the damsels, when they celebrated his victory in their songs, what shall it be to be celebrated by all the angels and saints in celestial responses? When a servant of God enters into heaven he shall be received with Divine music, all the blessed in heaven often repeating those words in the Gospel, "Well done, good servant and true; because thou hast been faithful in a few things, thou shalt be placed over much; enter thou into thy Master's joy," which words they shall repeat in choirs. This shall be a song of victory and honour, above all the honours of the earth, being conferred by so great, so wise, so holy, and so authentic persons.

Jeremy Taylor.

The two Angels.

[Written on the birth of a child to the author, and the death of Mrs. Maria Lowell, the wife of another American poet, on the same day.]

Two angels, one of Life and one of Death,
Passed o'er the village, as the morning broke.
The dawn was on their faces—and beneath
The sombre houses wreathed with plumes of smoke.

Their attitude and aspect were the same,
Alike their features and their robes of white;
And one was crowned with amaranth, as with flame,
And one with asphodels, like flakes of light.

I saw them pass on their celestial way;
Then said I, with deep fear and doubt oppressed,
"Beat not so loud, my heart, lest thou betray
The place where thy beloved are at rest."

And he who wore the crown of asphodels,
Descending at my door began to knock;
And my soul sank within me, as in wells
The waters sink before an earthquake shock.

I recognized the nameless agony—
The terror, and the tremor, and the pain,—
That oft before had filled and haunted me,
And now returned with threefold strength again.

The door I opened to my heavenly guest,
And listened, for I thought I heard God's voice;
And knowing whatsoe'er He sent was best,
Dared neither to lament, nor to rejoice.

Then with a smile that filled the house with light,
"My errand is not Death, but Life," he said;
And e'er I answered, passing out of sight,
On his celestial embassy he sped.

'Twas at thy door, O friend, and not at mine,
The angel with the amaranthine wreath,
Pausing descended; and with voice divine,
Whispered a word that had a sound like death.

Then fell upon the house a sudden gloom,
A shadow on those features fair and thin;
And softly from that hushed, and darkened room,
Two angels issued, where but one went in.

All is of God. If He but wave His hand,
The mists collect, the rain falls thick and loud;
Till with a smile of light on sea and land,
Lo, He looks back from the departing cloud.

Angels of Life and Death alike are His,
Without His leave, they pass no threshold o'er;
Who then would wish or dare, believing this,
Against His messengers to shut the door?

Longfellow.

It may be said with little risk that if the word envoy or delegate be mentally substituted by the reader for angel, the meaning of the word will be conveyed.

Before the captivity of Babylon we find no angel mentioned by name. In the New Testament we observe two names of angels, Gabriel and Michael, the same as in Daniel. Origen considered them created at the same time as the *heavens*, and that Moses included them under that term. Others, as Basil and Ambrose, assert that they were created before the world, and Job xxviii. 4, 7, seems to favour their opinion. St. Paul hints at subordination among the angels in heaven, "one differing from another in glory," —and while the Sadducees denied the existence of angels, other Jews paid them a superstitious reverence.

Calmet.

And is there care in heaven, and is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,
That may compassion of their evils move?
There is, else much more wretched were the case
Of men than beasts; but oh! the exceeding grace
Of Highest God, that loves His creatures so,
And all His works with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed angels He sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked men,—to serve His wicked foe.

How oft do they their silver bowers leave,
To come to succour us, who succour want;
How oft do they, with golden pinions, cleave
The flitting skies, like flying pursuivants

Against fouls fiends, to aid us militant!
They for us fight, they watch, and duly guard,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant,
And all for love of God and nothing for reward;
Oh! why should heavenly God, to man have such regard?

Spenser.

All the idea that man can form of the ways of Providence of the employment of angels and spirits, must ever fall short of the reality: but still it is right to think of them.

What can have a more exalting influence on the earthly life than in these first days of our existence, to make ourselves conversant with the lives of the blessed, with the happy spirits whose society we shall hereafter enjoy? We should accustom ourselves to consider the spirits of heaven always around us, observing all our steps and witnessing our most secret actions. Whoever is become familiar with these ideas, will find the most solitary place peopled with the best society.

Klopstock.

SYMPATHY.

TRUE sympathy is essential to the existence of perfect love; and its absence causes more misery in families than the presence of a positive evil. It is the only food affection craves; without it the love of a friend may linger awhile, but eventually it must become fainter and fainter, until, like a plant lacking moisture, it withers away. God has ordained that no heart should thrive without sympathy, for it is a potent enemy to selfishness, and is the hidden tie of nature, which binds more or less closely, all the families of the earth; and further still, it is the "band of love," by which our great High Priest draws us to Himself (see Hosea xi. 4, and Heb. iv. 15). His is indeed sympathy, the most perfect, the most enduring;—*perfect*—because, as God, all things are known to Him; and, as man, He was in all points tempted *(i.e. tried)* like as we are, therefore must have felt, by experience, the pangs of hunger, the miseries of poverty, the loss of friends, the cruel scorn of foes, besides the agonies of a shameful death, and the far more poignant suffering of imputed sin, when His Father's face was hidden from Him;—*enduring*—because the love of our Redeemer, unlike the changing sentiments of erring man, is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. "I am the Lord, I change not."

Jesus tells His disciples to "love one another," and by precept and example He has taught them this can be most perfectly displayed by sympathy. Think how He was moved to tears at Lazarus' grave, sympathising with the sisters' grief, although He knew He had power to restore the dead to life. He told the disciples, before He left them, that if they loved Him they would rejoice at His return to the Father (John xiv. 28). Jesus spoke of the sympathy of angels with mankind, Luke xv. 10. The apostle Paul gives this exhortation, in the 12th chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, at the 10th verse: "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love;" which is followed in the 15th verse by the very pith of the Gospel law, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." It is even so, dear friends, unless we can feel *sympathy* for one another, our brotherly love is very unreal.

In a former paper I enlarged upon "The power of kindness," but now I am desirous of drawing attention to this particular form of kindness. It is kind to give bread to the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick and distressed; but all these, and yet greater acts of charity, are far out-weighed by a little genuine sympathy, for it conveys such comfort to the heart, that, although the heavy burdens of trouble or care may remain undiminished, they no longer have power to oppress. Deeds of charity should *not* be dispensed with, but let them be ever accompanied by the softening kindness of tender sympathy. Who has not, at some time, experienced the blessed relief of human sympathy? O, then withhold it not from others in their hour of need!

It is certainly not alike easy for all to sympathise with their fellow-creatures; for God has bestowed on some such gentle natures, that not a pin can hurt a neighbour without causing them equal pain; while others have natures so adapted to battle with the ills of life, that they are not only callous to the woes around, but, almost insensible to the sharp arrows sent into their own camp. I have known such, and cannot tell whether to pity most the sensitive plant, or the impenetrable rock of flint.

But, happily for the training of mankind, the greater number of human beings are gifted with feelings sufficient to try without crushing them, at the same time rendering them sensible of the joys and sufferings of others. I have an earnest word for all:—You, gentle ones, remember that God *never* sends a trial without the strength to bear it; with this thought comfort your own hearts, and those for whom you grieve. And you, unhappy professor of Christianity, wrapped in mantle of ice, take your garment to Jesus, that He may melt it, ask Him daily to soften your hard heart by His Holy Spirit, that you may become touched with a feeling of your

own infirmities; and this will surely be followed by sympathy for the infirmities of others.

And, dear friends, you, who have not either of these extremes in your nature to struggle against, beware lest you permit that universal bane, selfishness, to stay your sympathy. If you are in earnest, in desiring to show kindness, you need not go far to find objects; for, when God beheld Abraham's willingness to offer up the greatest sacrifice the Lord could require at his hands, God bade him stay his hand from slaying his son, and provided him with a ram for a substitute; so also the Searcher of hearts sees your secret yearnings to do some great thing for Him, and provides you continual and abundant ways of testifying your love.

Esteem it not lightly that you are called upon to undergo no extraordinary trial; you are not bidden to die for others, nor to suffer imprisonment for their sakes, nor even to deprive yourself of necessaries for them:—He, who bade Naaman simply to wash in Jordan's despised waters, bids you prove your love to Him by showing, before all things, sympathy to the members of your own family; to the seniors in their cares; to the young ones, in their childish mirth or grief; to the servants in the peculiar trials of their station.

But, as a stone, cast into water, creates a small circle, which quickly widens until it embraces the whole pond; so sympathy, commencing in the bosom of a family, will extend far and wide, until, though with less intensity, it will embrace the remotest regions of the globe.

Let us now glance at the especial claims on our sympathy nearer home. As Sunday teachers we ought freely to sympathise with the trials as well as the success of our superintendent; for one in that difficult position, has great need of the support of kind looks and words. Our fellow-teachers, too, require a like testimony of loving fellowship. But, above all, the children of the school have an undoubted claim on the sympathy of their several teachers.

If we feel no Christian love for the children, our most eloquent teaching is but as "sounding brass or a tinking cymbal" (1 Cor. xiii. 1); but there is great danger that we may lavish mistaken kindness on some among the young ones if we do not seek first to gain thorough knowledge of each. We must take heed, lest we ignorantly supply comfort, where reproof is needed; or speak of judgments, when the little heart is well nigh breaking. This shows the need of sympathy, and that is only gained by a careful study of the children's several characters, and by seeking to discover (by observation and acquaintance with their lives at home) both the drawbacks and the various temptations and trials of all; then we must place ourselves in their position, and strive to look on things

not with the eyes of mature judgment and the feelings of ease and affluence, but from *their* point of view, and under *their* circumstances; then we shall be able truly to sympathise with them, and to win their affection, which is the pleasant means, within our reach, to lead them to go with us to the compassionate Saviour, who feels for us far more than we can for one another.

Hana.

WORK.

Work? It is the lot of all. It was imposed upon Adam when he fell, and he was the first of all his innumerable posterity who realized the full force of the sentence, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Work?—Who can avoid it in earthly things? None; we are daily undergoing this part of our doom, and might all daily call to mind our sin in this our condition. But judgment here was tempered with mercy, and work has become to millions not a punishment, but a necessity on which much of their happiness depends. Look how men toil. It may be that they may lay up much gold, and build themselves houses, and leave much to their children; or it may be that they may obtain bread for to-day, with no certainty that they will obtain it for to-morrow. Such is the lot of many, even of those who are not without God in the world; and then how sweet is labour! for they know that when the reward comes, food for the household is sure.

If labour is a necessity of our nature in temporal things, no less is it in spiritual things. We must *work out* our own salvation with fear and trembling; we must *labour* for the meat which endureth to everlasting life; we must *strive* to enter in at the strait gate; we must *wrestle* against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of the world, against spiritual wickedness in high places; we must *fight* the good fight of faith. Were it needed, we might multiply evidences in proof of our assertion. But who needs them? —does not the experience of every Christian bear witness to the severity of the toil that is demanded to keep his soul aright? What watchings, what tears, what conflicts are his! He can never lay aside his armour, for he can make no truce with his enemy. It is all work from beginning to end, and he who lays aside his working attire will soon find himself attacked and overcome by the wicked one. To us, then, who thus labour, how sweet the Saviour's invitation, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you." Who but the tried can enter into the meaning of

these heavenly words! They apply to believers in every condition. We are all weary, we all are borne down with the intolerable weight of our sins, but the gracious promises of the Gospel lighten our load and cheer our path, and cause us to run with joy the race set before us, looking for the reward.

While we think of the labour which the salvation of our own souls demands, let us not overlook that other labour—work for God—in endeavouring to win souls to Him. Our Saviour's meat was to do the will of Him who sent Him, and to finish His work. So must we work—work while it is called to-day, because the night cometh when no man can work. Our night of death will come, and what is left cannot be finished; our opportunities of doing good slip by us, often never to return. The lives of others pass away, and the good that we might have done to them is left undone!

And in this working for the good of others, the advantage does not all lie on their side; there is this blessedness attached to it—while we do them good, our own souls lie not fallow, for he who watereth others shall be also watered himself. It is part of that great law of compensation which seems to prevail on the earth—do good to another and some benefit will accrue to yourself: do harm, and you shall receive injury. We do not put this forward as the motive to good actions—no one will accuse us of that—but to show that even in this life we shall in no wise lose our reward.

For others then, how great the necessity that we should work. How many do we see who are perishing for lack of knowledge; whose souls are in danger of being lost because we have not taught them the saving truths which we have learned; who would be as useful in their generation as we have been, and die in that "sure and certain hope" which we hope to have in our end, had we been more impressed with the awful truth that we *are* our brother's keeper. We are learning this truth, and are beginning to see that we shall be considered guilty concerning him if we do not put forth our hands for his help.

In the Sunday school much of this work may be done—in visiting the houses of the poor and the depraved, administering consolation to those and warning these, and urging both to seek pardon and peace in believing. There are many other ways in which we may do God's work, but whatever it may be, let us do it to His glory, and give all the praise to Him.

"BY LOVE, SERVE."

"THE Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Can His people then desire a higher honour, a greater privilege than that of ministering one to another? Is it not "enough for the servant that he be as his Master, the disciple as His Lord?" We may almost call to *serve* an instinct of Christian life. The reception of, the belief in, God's love, made known to us in His Son, is the opening of a spring which not only flows out in love to God as revealed in Jesus, but which also necessarily expresses itself in grateful service for His sake. If we have spiritual life we must *love*, if we love we must *serve*.

But what is implied in service?—First, and foremost, humility. The duty must be recognised, its real dignity understood, it must be accepted frankly as our rightful position, that we are to serve. Again, it implies self-forgetfulness. To serve faithfully, efficiently, truly, no selfish consideration must interfere with our devotedness. The moment self-pleasing is suffered to rise up, that moment we renounce the honour of serving for Jesus' sake. Once more, to serve implies effort. It is true that "they also serve who only stand and wait," but this is when the Master bids them so. When the command runs to "serve" there must be active exertion, earnest self-denial.

Dear friends, have we realised this duty? Have we accepted this position? Are we rejoicing in this privilege? As Sunday school Teachers we profess that we have done so. In our measure we adopt the Apostle's words, and substituting "teach" for "preach," we also say, "We teach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

Nor is our ministry confined to that which we render within the walls of a Sabbath school. The very thought of serving, does it not make many a loving heart beat with a strong desire that to all around it might be a help, that whatever be "the gifts" received, it might be "ministered" to others for their comfort, their aid, their everlasting good?

And it is with no wish to check one "holy desire, good counsel, or just work," that I would ask especially the useful, active-minded servant of Christ to consider the force of the expression, "*By love, serve.*" Such a consideration may possibly save some young and ardent spirit from mistake, from disappointment, from fruitless vain regrets.

It were easy to show, and it is important to bear in mind, that it

is by love to Christ that we must serve His people. This must be the source, the living spring, the ceaseless flow, by which every effort for others is kept in exercise.

Yet the words, "By love, serve," rather point to the way in which service is to be rendered, than to the motive by which it is prompted. And here we may enquire whether we do not fail at times in accomplishing our desire, through an unsuspected lack of humility and of self-forgetfulness, rather than by want of effort.

It may be that we have some work for God to do among the poor; we would fain serve them, do something for their happiness in this world and the next. But are we not apt to insist, in deed, if not in word, that they shall be served *in our way?* We think that we know what is good for them better than they do themselves, and possibly we do, but love would teach us to keep far away all assumption of *right* to advise; we should learn by its deep sympathy the how, the when, the where alike to speak and to be silent, to act and to forbear: we should take no advantage of our position as visitors or teachers, as though it gave us liberty to interfere, we should, in a word, "by love, serve," and such service will be often accepted with a grateful appreciation to which the labour expended bears but a small proportion.

Or our service may lie among our friends, it may be the help which we can render in our homes or in society; the willing mind, the ready feet, the active hands, which only need to be required, to bring them all into instant play. And yet, even here, who has not experienced that what was meant to be help, has really proved a trial? There is a want of tact, (which in reality is often a want of unselfishness, and therefore of love), which does not understand *how* to render the service it is so abundantly willing to give. To serve another needs a delicate perception, an utter absence of self, a love which can, as by an instinct, divine the "due season" for spoken words, the right moment for acted deeds. Such a love will teach a wondrous wisdom of adaptation, while it will be content to be itself unobserved, or altogether unappreciated.

Let us then, dear friends, "by love, serve" our heavenly Master. His service has in it this "perfect freedom," that if it be not always wisely given, He "knoweth all things," and will not despise our heart's desire. "By love," let us "serve" the ministers whom God has set over us, yielding our own will, strengthening their hands, unobtrusively watching for opportunities to lighten a burden whose weight none but themselves can tell. "By love," let us "serve" all around us, not insisting on their seeing as we see, and doing always what we do, not viewing their circumstances from our own stand-point, and determining which way they must be helped,

but learning the difficult yet blessed lesson of "self-renouncing love," a love which—hard task—will even sit still and do nothing, because convinced that thus it will in reality serve most effectually.

"By love "let us "serve" the children and young people who are placed under our care, entering into their feelings, learning their peculiarities, becoming all things to them, if only we may "save some." Perhaps there is no higher discipline for love than this quiet service, which is so far removed from the busy, bustling activity that is only too natural to many of us. Not that the active work of love is to be undervalued,—would that we all had more of it!—but there are some to whom energy of character is a temptation, and whose "strength" in love, as well as in faith and patience, would not seldom be to "sit still." And there is a service which, thanks be to God, we all can render when no other door is open for us. To "labour fervently" for those we love "in prayers," is an effort which cannot be repelled, a service not to be rejected. How our unbelief shows itself, when from some one who does not want, and will not have our service, we turn away with the thought, "I can do nothing but pray." Nothing but pray? Has prayer then no power,—God's word no promise,—or has He ceased to be "the faithful God?" Rather let us feel that when *we* can do nothing, *then* it is time for God to work. And thus, even when our most laborious efforts, our most active labours, our most carefully considered work is thrown away, or seems to be so, love, never-failing love, may change, but will not give up her ministry; by the prayer of faith she will still feed the flame, and "*by love*" expressed in supplications, it may be "with strong crying and tears," it will still, and while life shall last, be our privilege to "serve."

Bora.

A PRAYER FOR GOD'S HELP.

Author of good! to Thee I turn:
Thy ever wakeful eye
Alone can all my wants discern,
Thy hand alone supply.

Oh let Thy fear within me dwell,
Thy love my footsteps guide;
That love shall meaner loves expel,
That fear all fears beside.

And Oh! by error's force subdu'd,
Since oft my stubborn will
Preposterous shuns the latent good,
And grasps the specious ill;

Not to my wish, but to my want,
Do Thou Thy gifts apply;
Unasked, what good Thou knowest, grant;
What ill, though asked, deny.

James Merrick.

TEACHING BY EXAMPLE.

ONLY a very small portion of the Word of God is occupied with positive precepts or laws for the guidance of mankind. The Old Testament, viewed as a whole, might rather be regarded as a history of the people whom God had chosen to Himself, and of the purposes of the dispensations preceding the coming of our Lord; the New Testament gives us a full account of the Saviour personally, and of the objects of the new dispensation which He came into the world to establish. But besides being the history of a chosen race, and a record of God's Providence over the world from the beginning, the Bible is conspicuous for the personal biographies of individuals which it contains—all of them taking some part, for good or ill, in the great design, but each one so minutely and graphically described to us, that they seem to live again in our minds, while the very motives of their actions, and their inward thoughts and emotions are accurately recorded.

Surely there was a purpose in all this. Nothing is written in the Bible but what has some application to God's people in all times; and it cannot be doubted that Divine wisdom is as much displayed in the manner in which what we have to learn is imparted to us, as in the infinite superiority of the truths themselves to any which man's intellect could devise. If human learning had planned the construction of the Bible, it would not have been in the form in which it now appears; the very peculiarity of the way in which it fulfils its object, is a proof of its Divine origin,—for certainly such narratives as are contained in it, of individual lives of, it might seem, insignificant personages, would never have been designed by the ingenuity of men to form part of a revelation which they desired others to believe came from God Himself.

It would seem, however, that our all-wise and merciful Father, knowing whereof we are made, had compassion upon our infirmities, and lest we should fail to learn His will concerning us by His own direct declaration of it, has also given us an account of His dealings with individuals, in every variety of condition and circumstance—showing us what He approved in them, and what He condemned,—what was according to the Spirit of His law, and what opposed to it in their individual lives,—to help us to understand the more readily what He would have us to do if we would obtain His blessing. We have the human heart in all its varied workings laid bare to us in the Bible; we can trace its operations in the good and the evil, by which many of the characters set before us in Scripture are distinguished; and we can learn the mind of God on all things

which concern us, by seeing how He felt and acted towards the obedient or rebellious in times gone by, for He "changeth not," but is the same in holiness and truth, in love and mercy, to everlasting.

The principal teaching of the Bible is *by example*—by special instances set before us, that we may imitate them in those things which God has approved, and be warned by their downfall when they have sinned against Him. "All these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. x. 11). "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope" (Rom. xv. 4). Our blessed Lord Himself, while dwelling among us, was constantly teaching by example, employing illustrations of every-day life as the basis of His discourses; moreover, He gave us the very highest standard for imitation when He said, "Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect," and cited His acts of unmerited kindness and forbearance to us, as a reason why we should do good to all. At another time, when He would have us find the true rest, He says, "learn of ME," and to Him as the great Exemplar, we are bidden by all the Apostles continually to look. From the instance of the first Adam and his fall, to the advent of the second Adam, and the renewal of the perfection of mankind in Him, the Bible everywhere teaches us *by example* what God would have us to do.

Nor is it different in the world of Nature, which has been aptly called "the living visible garment of God." The Author of revelation is there mutely teaching us lessons of Divine love, and strengthening our trust in His unceasing Providence. "Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. *Wherefore*, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you?" On every side of us are proofs of His wisdom and goodness, and those who "stand still and consider the wondrous works of God," will find their faith aided, and their love strengthened, for

> "In contemplation of created things
> By steps we may ascend to God,"

and we shall feel with David, "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works, in wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is full of Thy riches."

The same lessons can be learnt, by those who will seek for them, in the dispensations of Providence in our own times, no less than in the ages to which the Bible refers; for in the ordering of events in our own and other countries, in the present day, as well as in the usual course of our lives, and of those with whom we are personally acquainted, we can likewise trace the hand of God over-ruling all, and learn the great lesson which is taught us in the Bible by positive precept, that "the curse of the Lord is on the house of the wicked, but He blesseth the habitation of the just."

Our experience of the world at large shows us that teaching by example is not only the most general, but the most efficacious and most direct method. The history of modern nations, and of their intercommunication with others, shows us how their characteristics have been moulded by the examples which have been presented to them for imitation. Provinces of the same country retain practices and peculiarities, having their origin in those which have long prevailed in the locality, and which are transmitted from age to age among them; and in neighbourhoods of the same city, we find certain vices to prevail and to spread, by the force which an evil example has upon those before whom it is set, and their unconscious imitation of it. Even in the family circle, characteristics of the members are transmitted and preserved through generations by the intuitive influence of example; and hence the importance of our recognising the principle that we have each not only been taught by the example of others, but have also the power of teaching by the same means. "No man is so insignificant as to be sure his example can do no hurt," was said by Lord Clarendon of old; and a modern writer, speaking of the power of influence, has observed very beautifully, "as a little silvery circular ripple, set in motion by the falling pebble, expands from its inch of radius to the whole compass of the pool, so there is not a child—not an infant Moses—placed, however softly, in his bulrush ark upon the sea of time, whose existence does not stir a ripple, gyrating outward and on, until it shall have moved across, and spanned the whole ocean of God's eternity, stirring even the river of life, and the fountains at which His angels drink."

Let us, then, endeavour to realise the fact, which all experience in all ages proves to be indisputable, that the example of each one of us, however humble or apparently insignificant our sphere may be, has a power, for good or ill, upon all those with whom we are habitually brought in contact; and that unconsciously both to us and to them, we are forming their characters for eternity, and doing something either to add to or to diminish from the sum total of human happiness. Conscious of the fact that such will be the

case, whether we desire it or not, how important is it that we should heed the words of *our* Great Examplar, "Let your *light* so shine before men that they may see your *good* works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven;" and the similar exhortation of St. Paul, "in all things showing thyself a *pattern* of good works."

First, in our homes, among those who love us, with whom we constantly associate, and over whom the ties of affection will give us the greatest influence, let us see that our example is such as will do them good, and not harm. Next, in the sphere of daily duty, among the companions of our business hours, when religion is unhappily so rarely spoken or thought of, let the silent power of our example of kindness, patience, and forbearance, of integrity, truthfulness, and activity, be felt, if our voice cannot be heard on the matter; and in our hours of recreation and of rest, while enjoying harmlessly whatsoever things are pure, let us not forget we are instinctively moulding the hearts and minds, the tempers, dispositions, and tastes of those with whom we are thus brought into communion. And if it has pleased God to place us in a wider sphere of influence than that which the ordinary private life of individuals presents, let it be our care to see that we exert the power thus given in His service, and for the good of our fellow creatures.

As Sunday school teachers it is of especial importance that we should realize this truth, for then we are professedly endeavouring to lead the children entrusted to us into the ways of God, and to guide them into paths of holiness. For our lives not to harmonise with our principles in such a position would obviously be an inconsistency, which must nullify our efforts, for it has been well said by an old divine—"Either take Christ in your lives, or cast Him out of your lips: either be that thou seemest, or else be what thou art." We all know the power of example,—how much more prevailing it is as an argument than any reasonings, how much more gracious in its influence than any mere rule of doctrine: and in the case of children we know of nothing which seems to be so instinctive in them, as the propensity to *imitate* the conduct and to adopt the sentiments, passions, tastes, and affections of those with whom they associate or by whom they are guided. There must be a perfect agreement, then, between the teaching by our example and of our words—else the lessons of our lives will be more readily adopted than the words of our lips (see Rom. ii. 17—24).

We know how difficult this is—how much of self-discipline it involves—how constantly we need grace from above to repress what is evil in us, and to kindle what is good; but it is a solemn responsibility attaching to all, and especially to those speaking as followers of Jesus, that we should in our lives manifest whose we are and

whom we serve, and adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour in all things. Grievous would it be for us to find, at the last, that we had failed to lead the little ones to love the Saviour or to strive to serve Him, because they found in our conduct that which belied our teaching—that while we gave them the Bread of Life on the Sabbath-day, our example in the week poisoned the heavenly food, and made it distasteful to them. As teachers too, envious, unloving eyes are watching us—those who love not the Gospel in which we trust, and the Saviour whom we desire to serve and honour, and who will be very glad to discover anything by which our influence may be lessened, our good be evil spoken of, or occasion found for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. The same responsibility attaches, we know, to every professed believer, but especially does the world watch jealously those engaged on the Lord's side as its opponents, and therefore the more need that by no inconsistency should we give occasion to our brother to offend. Above all, the Master whom we desire to please, is looking upon us, and His Spirit urging us to be faithful to Him in all things; let us, then, the more earnestly strive to make Him in all things the pattern of our lives, so that whatsoever we do we may do all to the glory of God, and men may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.

M. S.

ANECDOTE.

A LESSON ON PATIENCE.

A CLERGYMAN, who superintends his own school, about to give a lesson on this subject to the assembled scholars, commenced by asking them what the subject was for that day.

"Patience," they replied.

"Have you any?" he asked.

No answer.

"Have I any?"

"Yes, sir."

"When do I need it most?" he inquired.

"*When you're trying to keep us quiet*," was the answer.

S. B. P.

The Teacher in his Study.

SCENES IN PALESTINE, AND THE LESSONS CONNECTED WITH THEM.

No. V.

MOUNT CARMEL.

THERE are two places of the name of Carmel spoken of in Holy Scripture,—the one situated in the territory of Judah, the other in that of the half tribe of Manasseh.

The former we shall only notice to dismiss it as not the well known and memorable spot to the consideration of which this paper is to be devoted. It is mentioned in the list of the cities of Judah, in Joshua, xv. 55. Its name occurs again in 1 Sam. xv. 12. "And when Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul, it was told Samuel saying, Saul came to Carmel, and behold he set him up a place and is gone about and passed on and gone down to Gilgal." And once more allusion to it is made in the history of Nabal and Abigail 1 Samuel, xxv. from which chapter we gather that it was in the wilderness of Paran.

It is the other Carmel, however with which the students of Holy Scripture are most familiar. We have chosen it as a spot of peculiar interest, and of much thrilling association, and as one to which it may be of some service to direct the thoughtful attention of our readers. First, then, let us attempt to give some slight description of its geographical position. It is the one striking promontory on the coast of Palestine, standing not quite midway between its northern and southern extremities, and nearer to the north it pushes forth a mighty headland into the waters of the blue Mediterranean, just at the end of the great plain, and to the south of the unequal and pebbly Kishon. Around its base there stretches a broad beach as far as the bay of Acre, perhaps partly the deposits of the stream which here discharges its variable flood into the clearer waters of the deep.

The town of Acre is identical with Ptolemais, to which allusion is made as the port at which St. Paul landed after his return from Greece and Asia, on his way to Jerusalem. Acts xxi. 6, 7. "And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship, and they returned home again. And when we had finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais and saluted the brethren and abode with them one day." This is the only notice in the New

Testament of what was once an important seaport, the interest of which however has outlived the fall of Judæa and has been associated with the wars of the Crusaders and with events of more modern date.

The word Carmel originally signifies "a park" or else "a well wooded country," or "a fruitful field." The mountain itself has no peculiarity of shape, and its garden-like appearance is its chief distinction. By this natural luxuriant beauty it is pre-eminently distinguished from the adjacent territory. "Rocky dells, "says Canon Stanley," with deep jungles of copse are found there alone in Palestine, and though to European eyes it presents a forest beauty only of an inferior order, there is no wonder that to an Israelite it seemed 'the park' of his country." It is in accordance with this character that various fanciful allusions are made to it in the Books of the Prophets. Thus Solomon says in Canticles, vii. 5. speaking of the tresses of the Church as the bride of Christ, "Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple." Thus Isaiah alludes to it as the type of beauty; —"The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon." ch: xxxv. 2. Whilst the prophet Amos, ch: i. 2, likens the withering of its fruits to desolation; "The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the habitations of shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither."

We are told further by Canon Stanley, that "the promontory running into the sea, and crowned by its convent does not even profess to represent the scene which is the chief pride in the history of Carmel. The Convent derives its interest not from any connection, real or pretended, with the Prophet Elijah, but from the celebrated order of barefooted monks that has sprung from it, and carried the name of Carmel into the monasteries of Europe. The large caves indeed which exist under the western cliffs, frequented by Christians, Jews, and Mussulmans, who have left their memorials in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and in the niches and prayer-mats of Arab devotion, may have been the shelter of Elijah and the persecuted prophets. . . . The Convent, built on the summit is of comparatively recent date, the last effort of the crusades,—an offshoot of the fortress of Acre in the adjacent bay, founded by St. Louis in his brief and only visit to the shores of Palestine, and still bearing the sign of its French origin in the French flag, which is unfurled on its towers whenever a French vessel appears in sight on the Syrian waters."

We now turn to consider more minutely that striking historical event with which the name of Carmel will always remain associated, and which must be so well known to all our readers, that we shall only say that of course we mean those circumstances in the history

of Ahab and Elijah, which are recorded in 1 Kings, xviii. The spot upon which the actual sacrifice took place can yet be ascertained, without almost the shadow of a doubt, by the tourist. It is still called by the Druses, "El-Maharrakah" *i. e.* the Sacrifice. It is marked by the ruin of a quadrangular building, around which many rocky fragments lie, from which very probably the stones were taken to construct the Prophet's altar. From it you obtain the last glimpse of the azure sea, whilst beneath there stretches far away at your feet, the great plain of Esdraelon. It was on this eastern inland extremity of Carmel that Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord, which had been broken down. This scene is so graphically depicted by the writer to whom all along we have been so greatly indebted in the preparation of these papers, that we must quote his language verbatim:—"Close behind on a wide upland sweep, under the shade of ancient olives, and round a well of water said to be perennial, and which may therefore have escaped the general drought, and have been able to furnish water for the trenches round about the altar, must have ranged on one side the king and people, with the eight hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and Astarte, and on the other side the solitary and commanding figure of the prophet of the Lord. . . . . Such a scene was indeed a fitting theatre for a conflict more momentous than any which their ancestors had fought in the plain below. We understand what must have been the intense solemnity and significance of that conflict which lasted on the mountain height from morning till noon, from noon till the time of the evening sacrifice. It ended at last in the level plain below, where Elijah 'brought' the defeated prophets 'down' the steep side of the mountain 'to the torrent of the Kishon, and slew them there.' The closing scene still remains. From the slaughter by the side of the Kishon, the King 'went up' at Elijah's bidding once again to the peaceful glades of Carmel, to join in the sacrificial feast. And Elijah too ascended to the top of the mountain, and there with his face upon the earth, remained wrapt in prayer, whilst his servant mounted to the highest point of all, whence there is a wide view of the blue reach of the Mediterranean sea over the western shoulder of the ridge. The sun was now gone down, but the cloudless sky was lit up with the long bright glow which succeeds an eastern sunset. Seven times the servant climbed and looked, and seven times there was nothing. The sky was still clear, the sea was still calm. At last out of the far horizon there rose a little cloud,—the first that had for days and months passed across the heavens,—and it grew in the deepening shades of evening; and at last the whole sky was overcast, and the forest of Carmel shook in the welcome sound of those mighty winds, which in eastern regions precede a

coming tempest. Each from his separate height, the King and the Prophet descended, and the King mounted his chariot at the foot of the mountain, lest the long-hoped-for rain should swell the torrent of the Kishon, as in the days when it swept away the host of Sisera;—and 'the hand of the Lord was upon Elijah,' and he girt his mantle round his loins, and amidst the rushing storm with which the night closed in, 'ran before the chariot' as the Bedouins of his native Gilead still run, with inexhaustible strength to the entrance of Jezreel, distant though still visible, from the scene of his triumph."

Now the lessons connected with this most important incident upon the summit of Carmel, are neither few nor powerless. We learn from it, first, how God is the Lord of the whole earth. He is not, as we sometimes fancy, simply concerned about the spiritual welfare of man, but earth, sky, sea, and air are after all but the ministers of His purpose, and the accomplishers of His will. Not in vain when summer droughts prevail, or when the floods lift up their voice and threaten destruction to the fruits of our fields, do we make known our distress to His Almighty ear. The clouds thicken or disperse just as He bids them, and even when most unexpected, either showers refresh, or sunshine gladdens the anxious labours of the husbandman.

But the lesson is deeper yet. Regarding the solitary figure of the prophet upon Carmel's summit, I am taught secondly, the resistless power of truth. Elijah, as we gather from the subsequent chapter, regarded himself as the sole representative of Jehovah, but even under that solitary belief He accomplished in him, the prophetic promise "As thy days so shall thy strength be." Alone he confronted royalty and a numerous opposition, and alone, in a power mightier than his own, he vindicated the honours of an insulted God. Learn we the same lesson, and let us rest assured, that though invisible, still the hosts of heaven fight with us in every effort which we honestly make for the honour of our God.

Once more: let us not forget, as we stand in thought on Carmel's brow, to realize the power of prayer. Nothing can exceed the fervour and the solemnity of the Prophet's prayer. It is the type of real and genuine supplication. It betrays an earnest desire simply for the honour and glory of the Almighty, a hatred of sin, a confidence in His power. Be it for us an example,—for us who in our measure have to wage war against sin and idolatry, and whose work is both for those precious souls whom we instruct in the principles of the faith, as well as for our own, to cast down all strongholds and to bring every thought into the obedience of Christ.

LIGHT.

Light is supposed to be a substance composed of particles which are inconceivably small and fine. "If a million of these particles were as large as one grain of sand, we should no more dare to open our eyes to the light than we should suffer sand to be shot into them from the mouth of a cannon." Light travels at the rate of 11,520,000 miles in a minute, or 192,000 miles in the twinkling of an eye. Its natural course is in straight lines, as straight as an arrow, but its rays are capable of being turned aside by the objects they meet with. These lines or rays of light are said to be refracted or broken from their natural course when they are turned out of a straight line into any other direction by the objects they fall upon. But when a ray of light falls on a substance which throws or gives the light back, it is said to be "reflected" or bent back from its natural course.

Light is the origin of colours. The light of the sun consists of seven colours; these are, violet, indigo, blue, green, orange, and red. A mixture of these, in different proportions, will form other colours, and a variety of other and different shades between. For instance, the union of yellow and blue will exhibit green, while red and yellow will produce orange. White is the combination of the seven colours, and black is the absence of them all. A substance which appears to us black, is so, because it absorbs the greater part of the light which falls on it instead of reflecting it. That which appears red, green, &c., is so, because the red or green article has the power of drawing out, and then reflecting the red or green rays of the light more powerfully than the other colours of which light is composed.

Each ray of light is composed of several other rays, all of different colours. This is proved by separating a ray into parts, by transmitting it through a glass prism, which divides the parts or colours from each other. Each colour, when separate, will remain unchanged. The seven colours may be further reduced to three,—red, yellow, and indigo. A body which sends out rays of its own is called a radiating, lucid, or luminous body, as the sun, which is sometimes called a luminary.

If the body only reflect rays which it receives from another it is called an illuminated body, such as the moon. If it only transmit rays it is a transparent body, as clear glass. If it refuse to admit the passage through it, it is called an opaque substance, as a piece of wood, a book, &c.

We proceed to notice a few points of analogy between light and those whom the Scriptures call the "children of light."

How useful and cheering is light! Without it no object above, around, or beneath us, would be visible. The precious gift of sight would be of no use or pleasure. So Christians should be in the circle in which they move. Their conduct should be such as to render their example a safe and useful guide to all around them. Matt. v. 14, 15; Phil. ii. 14, 15.

Light moves in straight lines. So the Christian's course should be without turning aside from the path of duty tracked out for him to walk in—that of good works—the fruits of the Spirit. A child of light receives his rays from the Sun of Righteousness shining upon him, and he will desire to walk *in* that light. Ps. lxxxix. 15; Isaiah ii. 5; John xii. 35, 36; Eph. ii. 10.

Light reveals all that is beautiful in nature. Every object that receives light reflects it more or less, drawing from it some tint or colour most agreeable to that object, and immediately giving it back that all may see it. So the Christian will desire to reveal the beauty of holiness by reflecting the light which God has given him,—that is, by good works, showing forth the holy and beautiful image of his Lord and his God. He is in himself a dark body, having no light but that which he receives from Christ, Eph. v. 14. And no works of his will be really *good works* except they are the fruits of the Spirit of all good, Eph. v. 19. The desire to please God is a spark of light kindled in the heart by God Himself, and it will be given back in earnest *endeavours* to please Him in every good work and word. Open and straightforward as the day, these works need no concealment, there is no shame or deformity requiring a veil of secresy to hide them, for they are of the day and not of darkness, and they reflect a glorious light, a light which is full of glory to God and of honour to man, Matt. v. 16; Titus ii. 10—14; 1 Peter ii. 12; Ps. cx. 3. Each ray of light is formed by the combination of others, all differing from each other. So the Church of Christ, being many members, forms one body in Christ. All the members have not the same office, but every one members one of another, Rom xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor xii. 12—29.

Light is the emblem, not only of all that is useful and pleasant, but also of all that is great and good, glorious and happy. It is the emblem of God Himself. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all," 1 John i. 5. He also is the fountain of all light and life, Ps. xxxvi 9; John i. 4. Light is the emblem of life, John viii. 12, and God is the fountain of all light and life, John i. 4; Ps. xxxvi. 9; of holiness, 1 John i. 6, 7; of knowledge and true wisdom, 2 Cor. iv. 6, contrasted with Eph. iv. 18: see Prov. ii. 2—20; spiritual advantages,

Is. ix. 2, with Matt. iv. 12—16; of joy and gladness, Ps. iv. 6. 7; xcvii. 11; cxii. 4; prosperity, Job xxii. 22—28; the Saviour, John i. 9; viiii. 12; eternal happiness and glory, Is. lx. 19, 20; Rev. xxi. 23—25. The period of life is compared to a day, and death is represented by night, John ix. 4. Life is a day of grace, a period of opportunities and means of obtaining grace, to be followed by the night of death and the succeeding day of judgment. In these passages it is implied that darkness would represent the opposite of light in each of its significations; but darkness is also the expressed emblem of sin, John iii. 19, 20; 1 John ii. 9—11; of Satan and his angels, Col. i. 13; Eph. ii. 2; vi. 12; of ignorance, 1 Thess. v. 4; the calamities and miseries of the wicked, Job xviii. 5—18; and the hopeless anguish of the lost, Matt. viii. 12.

The number seven is often used in Scripture to denote perfection, completeness; and it is a striking and beautiful coincidence between the word and works of Him whose works and ways are perfect, that light consists of seven colours, and that the union of these should form that of pure and perfect white. Christ requested for his people that they might be made perfect in one, John xvii. 2; and it is his counsel to apply to Him for that white raiment without which the soul will be found unclothed, Rev. iii. 18; xix. 8; 2 Cor. v. 3. The white robe, how fitting to be the emblem of the children of light, and to form the dress of such as are privileged to walk with Him who covereth Himself with light, as with a garment, Ps. civ. 2, and in whom alone his people are made perfect and complete, Col. ii. 10; Rev. iii. 4; vii. 9—14. How suitable to their home of light and glory, of which it is said, "There shall be no night there." How pure and spotless must they be who walk in that light! Who can attain it? How hopeless the task, if left for us to perform! Blessed be God that He has taken upon Himself to make us meet for the inheritance of light, Col. i. 12; Eph. v. 26, 27; 1 Pet. i. 2; Jude 24.

In connection with the circumstance of light being the chosen emblem of God, it is remarkable that the seven primary colours of which light is composed are capable of being reduced still further to *three*. The light of heaven is but an emblem, after all, of the glorious Three in One; but how sacred the associations it brings. To be children of light, we must have the light dwelling in us; then shall we walk in the light, be clothed with light, and be preparing for the mansions of light. How needful to be made complete in Christ, to have all our sins and shortcomings covered by the robe of Christ's perfect righteousness. Without this, how vain to hope for salvation. How dangerous to suppose that any-

thing less will do. Awful mistake! God is light, and his dwelling is in the light which no man can approach, and all that dwell with Him must be children of light. He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself. 1 John iii. 3.

The dawning of the day is a gradual process. By little and little the first appearance of the light widens and stretches over the morning sky, until the perfect day shines forth. So gradual also is the entrance of the light of truth in the sinner's heart. Hope in God's Word springs up, but it is often faint and weak, like the first feeble glimmering of the morning star amidst the darkness, a struggling speck of light between the breaking clouds. Yet, like that star, Hope, if it be a hope from God, a good hope, a blessed one, will not be a deceitful light, but a sure and certain harbinger, the forerunner of the coming day, an increasing light, shining more and more unto the perfect day, Ps. cxix. 49, 114; 2 Thes. ii. 16; Prov. iv. 18; Hosea vi. 3.

Once more, the light of day, so beautiful, so useful, so glorious, and so important in its consequences, is made up of "small things," of particles so small as to be inconceivable to the mind of man. Let us take heed then that we despise not the "day of small things" in nature, providence, or grace, Zech. iv. 10. In all and each of these God teaches plainly that whoever may despise the little things, HE does not. Among the boundless creations of His power our earth is but a speck, yet He prepareth the small rain for the tender herb that grows upon it, and the "earth is full of his goodness." On that earth He has a little flock of redeemed sinners, and how great, how tender his love for the lambs, the little ones of that flock! It is his own strict command "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones," Matt. xviii. 10. The thoughts and the words of them that fear Him are treasured up in his remembrance, Mal. iii. 16. "He will not despise their prayer," Ps. cii. 17, though conveyed on the "burden of a sigh, the falling of a tear," or by that which is still less likely to be noticed,

> "The upward glancing of an eye
> When none but God is near."

The cup of cold water given to a little one, in the name of a disciple, and for the Master's sake, shall be accepted and owned as a good work; and while the faithful servant will not withhold the most costly sacrifice in his power, Matt. xxvi. 7, 9, 10, he is yet encouraged by the thought that good works need not, of necessity, be great and expensive efforts. "To please the Lord" is a motive which consecrates the commonest duties of every day life, and turns them into religious works. In the smallest of these, when it is

all that we can do, we may faithfully serve the Lord Christ, and hope for his glorious reward. Colos. iii. 23, 24; John xvii. 22—24; xii. 26.

And, oh! how blessed are they—yea, blessed beyond measure are they who shall be found to have abounded most in these works of faith and love. For in the future world, among the millions who shine in its light and glory, they will shine in the ranks of the brightest who have made the most of their dark and wintry days on earth, in reflecting the light and the image of their Lord and Saviour. It is the light of his grace that enables them to behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, as He is revealed by his Word, James i. 23, 25; and by that grace they are changed into his image, 2 Cor. iii. 18, and having borne his image on earth, and in their faint degree of resemblance to Him, it will be their joyful and great reward to bear it in heaven, 1 Cor. xv. 49. Admitted to the presence of his glory, in near and close communion, they shall see Him as He is, and be made like unto Him in his eternal and glorious kingdom, 1 John iii. 2. Collect for sixth Sunday after Epiphany.

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand;" the glorious light of a better, of unclouded day, Rom. xiii. 12. Our brightest, happiest days are but as night in comparison with the approaching light of life eternal. In His light we shall see light as it has never yet been known, Ps. xxxvi. 9, and Is. xxx. 26.

O let us not be weary in well doing, but "cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light," always abounding in the work of the Lord; for the Master cometh quickly, and his reward is with Him, Rev. xxii. 12; Rom. xiii. 11, 12; Gal. vi. 9.

"His presence sheds eternal day
On those prepared to meet Him."

Blessed is that servant whom He shall pronounce "faithful and wise," even in few and small things. Made ruler over many things, he will enter into the joy of his Lord (see Heb. xii. 2; Is. li. 11) and feel, throughout endless ages, that his labour has NOT been in vain. 1 Cor. xv. 58; Matt. xxiv. 45—47.

Now is our day of grace; it will be followed by the night of death (John ix. 4), and the succeeding day of judgment. Means of light and grace, and opportunities of working for Christ, are entrusted to us; if faithful to them, oh! what joy in that bright world of light to meet with some—with *one* of our little flock—led thither through our feeble instrumentality. How welcome such words as these; "your instruction in that Sunday school was so richly blessed of God, that it was the means of turning me from the darkness of error, and saved my soul from death." It inspired me with an earnest, anxious desire that I might serve God faithfully

and acceptably, and so rise to the life immortal. Without it, I might, so far as I know, have sunk in the second death. To God be all the glory.

Surely the bare possibility of such a result should be enough to stimulate our diligence, and cause us to abound in the work of the Lord. If faithful to the light we NOW enjoy, with what exceeding joy shall we look back on the promises fulfilled, and say, "All are come to pass; not one hath failed," Josh, xxiii. 14. How thankfully shall we *then* look back, and say, "And it was so," Gen. i. 9, &c.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

IV.

THE brief prohibition expressed in the *Eighth Commandment* "Thou shalt not steal," merely indicates the mind of God, elsewhere distinctly declared to us, in respect to the important duty devolving upon us all, of rightly obtaining the worldly substance necessary for the sustenance of our lives, and of those dependent upon us. It stands next in order to the commandments regarding the preservation of man's life, and the purity of his nature; for to the violation of this law, and the neglect of its implied obligations, much of the misery, strife, and wickedness in the world must be attributed.

The command implies that it is lawful to have worldly possessions; if not, and all things were common, there could be no theft. Of old time, increase of temporal prosperity was the sign of the Divine blessing; under the law, the land of promise was divided into portions as the possession of the chosen people, Gen. xxiv. 35, 36; and though in the early days of the Gospel dispensation, men gave up their right in their property for the good of the little family of believers, yet it was a voluntary act (Acts v. 3, 4,) and not an obligation. The very duty of alms-giving implies the right over that which we possess, and the liberty to give of it or not as we please. And the frequent warnings given both by our Lord and His apostles against the abuse of riches indicates that a divine law prescribes the right employment of them. (Matt. vi. 19—34, Luke xii. 13—21, 1 Tim. vi. 17—19, 1 John iii. 17.)

It is plainly our duty, however, to obtain earthly possessions only by lawful means, and without thereby doing injury to others. "To be true and just in all my dealings," to be faithful in our engagements and contracts in business, not to seek our own advantage at the expense or injury of others, by fraud or deceit, is the first duty

taught by this commandment, see Zech. viii. 16, 17; Ps. xxxvii. 21; Luke xvi. 10—12; Ezek. xxii. 12. The next is that we regard our property as a trust from God to be used for Him. So shall we be led to employ it for His service, and for the help of those who need our assistance. Matt. xxv. 40; Luke vi. 30, 38; Gal. vi. 10. It is likewise implied by this command that we shall labour diligently to maintain ourselves—"to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me,"—lest by idleness, or waste, or extravagance, we become a burden to others (Prov. vi. 10, 11; 2 Thess. iii. 6, 10—12; 1 Tim. v. 8).

But the sins forbidden by this law will perhaps enable us to see, the more readily, how it ought to be fulfilled. To "steal" is not simply the taking by force that which is not our own, but any act by which intentionally we deprive others of their property, 1 Thess. iv. 6. Incurring debts by extravagance or imprudence which we cannot pay, (Prov. xxiii. 20) or are unable, or never even thought to discharge—covetously seeking gain by speculation or games of chance (Hab. ii. 9)—dealing with false weights and balances, or the scant measure, Levit. xix. 35, 36; Prov. xi. 1; Micah vi. 10; Deut. xxv. 13—16; seeking to depreciate the value of that which we wish to buy, and to exaggerate the worth of that we offer for sale, (Prov. xx. 14) connivance at the frauds of others, or the reception of that which we know to be stolen; taking advantage of the calamity of the distressed to exact from them more than is just, (Ps. xv. 5) refusing or evading the payment of lawful taxes to the state, (Rom. xiii. 7) or tithes to the Church, (Mal. iii. 8, 9) withholding the hire or wages of those employed by us, James v. 4; Deut. xxiv. 14, 15;—the omission to restore to the rightful owner that which we have found belonging to him, and not to make restitution to those whom we have injured, (Lev. vi. 2—5; Luke xix. 8.) or the neglect to endeavour to do that for the preservation of the property of others which we should wish done for our own. Deut. xxii. 1—4: in all these ways is this law broken. To act up to the teaching of the commandment, the spirit of our Lord's summary of all human obligations is necessary, "Thou shalt *love* thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. xxii. 39) and obedience to the injunction of the apostle "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." (Phil. ii. 4.)

The *Ninth Commandment* follows in order and connexion with those which have preceded it, and declares our duty to our neighbour in another and most important particular. His life, his honour, his goods have already been referred to: now we are taught the duty of guarding his good name and character among his fellow men;

'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." It is by sins of the tongue that we break this Divine law, and we have the authority of an apostle, added to our common experience, to show that this is a trial of obedience of no mean sort; see St. James' description of the tongue in his Epistle (James iii. 5—10). The gift of speech is indeed a marvellous one—a distinguishing mark of the human creature over others,—but it is one which more than any other faculty has been terribly misapplied. Prov. xv. 1, 2, 4, 7. In this Commandment we are taught the value of the utterance of truth and sincerity, as it affects the well-being of those about us. Prov. xxii. 1.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," primarily warns us against the sin of perjury—making a false statement on oath before the magistrate, when called as a witness in a controversy, whereby one, by our malice to him or favour to his adversary, is deprived of his right, or unjustly punished, through our untrue testimony. See Exod. xxiii. 1, 2; and also Deut. xix. 18,—21, where the punishment of such wickedness under the law is described. The obvious duty of a faithful and sincere man in such a case would be to speak the truth from the heart, (Ps. xv. 2) to plead all that could advance the good of the accused, (1 Sam. xix. 4) to state plainly what he knew, (2 Sam. xiv. 18—20) and not to allow rank or influence, liking or aversion, to affect his testimony (Lev. xix. 15). At all other times and on all occasions the same sincerity is due to our neighbour in our ordinary conversation respecting him—for "to keep my tongue from evil speaking, lying or slandering," is the obvious duty of every lover of the truth, or follower of the Saviour.

Yet there is scarcely any kind of sin against the laws of truth and charity more frequent than that which this commandment condemns. The false statement uttered to damage the reputation of another (Ps. ci. 5)—the effort to depreciate the good attributed to him,—the habit of so relating the truth as to make it appear different from what it really is, by tincturing it with falsehood,—the practise of exaggerating what we have heard or seen,—these are all opposed to the spirit of this law. While the vices of tale-bearing (Prov. xxvi. 22, 25) of backbiting and whispering evil of others unknown to them (Ps. xv. 3; Luke iii. 14) of encouraging bad thoughts and suggesting suspicions (Matt. vii. 1,—4: 1 Cor. xiii. 5,) are all condemned by it. Another form of untruthfulness is equivocation, arising it may be from the want of courage to tell the direct falsehood, lest it should be detected and exposed, and the practice of flattery (Prov. xxvi. 24, 25) as well as the falsehood, not spoken to do ill to our neighbour but to screen him from the consequences of his error, or as we may think to effect a good purpose. Instances of such untruthfulness we

may find related in Exodus i. 17—19; Josh. ii. 4—6; 1 Sam. xix. 13, 14; xx. 28, 29. On the other hand, it is not a violation of this law of charity and truth to condemn openly the vices which we know to exist, and which are to be reproved. Eccles. vii. 5.

We learn, then, that the God of holiness and truth requires us neither to speak nor think any false or unjust thing of our neighbour; but to think well of others (1 Cor. xiii. 7) so far as truth will justify us in doing so, and to preserve their reputation untouched, to our uttermost ability (Prov. xvii. 9). In all our doings we must bring everything to the light of truth, and both maintain and defend it; nor may we by our words, or by writing, nor yet by our silence or assent in holding our peace, once allow that which is falsely spoken by others to remain uncontradicted. God has declared His hatred of lying in all its forms and has enjoined His people to avoid it, see Prov. xii. 22; Zech. viii. 16; Matt. xii. 36, 37; Col. iii. 9, 10; Ephes. iv. 22, 25. Let it be our care, then, to watch the utterances of our lips, (James i. 26) to cultivate a reverence for truth in trifles, as well as in great matters, in ourselves, and among the children committed to our care (for the habit of lying is too frequently formed in early youth) and endeavour to realize that the gift of speech is a talent given to us by God that it may be used, as it so often is, for the promotion of His glory and for the good of our fellow-creatures. See Ps. xv. 1,—3; xxxiv. 12, 13; cxix. 163.

In the *Tenth Commandment*, which closes the Decalogue, no outward act of duty to our neighbour is enjoined, as in the preceding ones, but it is shown to us that God requires inward and spiritual, as well as outward and practical obedience: not only are we forbidden to act unjustly or unkindly to our neighbour, but in this law we are shown that we must not suffer any selfish desires, be they ever so light, to take possession of our hearts, nor any thought, be it ever so small, to gain a hold of our minds by which we might be tempted to do wrong to others. We are therefore taught the great lesson of Contentment—to accept thankfully that which God has bestowed upon us, and to enjoy what God gives us, without a wish to change our lot with others whom we may think more favoured, and not to murmur because our lot is not so fair as theirs, Is. xxvi. 3. Poverty, disease, affliction of spirit, may be our portion, as it is, in some form, the fate of all; but remembering the promise that "all things work together for good to them that love God," there is no room for complaining, but every reason to be satisfied with just what God gives us. Phil. iv. 11; 1 Tim. iv. 8; vi. 6; 2 Cor. xii. 9.

Opposed to this feeling is the desire to possess unlawfully that which is not ours, but which belongs rightfully to another. "To covet or desire other men's goods," is the first step towards going about to

obtain them for ourselves; to covet our neighbour's wife is in God's sight, who is a Spirit, and looketh at the heart as much as the outward conduct, equivalent to committing adultery: so our Lord has taught us, Matt. v. 27, 28; xv. 19. These evil desires are the fruit of the corruption of our nature, and the temptation of the great Enemy of our souls; if we would save ourselves from the sins to which they would entice us, we must not cherish, but resist them, else will they bring forth bitter fruits of wickedness, and end in death. James i. 13—15.

Two particular forms of evil feelings are specially condemned by this law—covetousness and envy—the one, the longing to desire more than we possess; the other, the jealous anger excited by seeing others in possession of that which we wish ourselves to obtain. The love of money, of gain, and of earthly power, has led to many of the worst crimes which have been committed in the world, and is indeed "the root of all evil." 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. See its effects on Balaam, Numb. xxii., on Elisha's servant, 2 Kings v. 20—27, on Ananias, Acts v. 1,—10, and on the unhappy Judas, Matt. xxvi. 15. Its consequences on the soul are doubly evil—for it not only closes the heart towards the poor, and makes the hand niggard in its help of them (how different from the spirit of Job xxix. 11—16) but it drives out the love of God from the heart, 1 John ii. 15, and prevents our serving Him acceptably. No wonder therefore that covetousness is everywhere condemned in Scripture; see Isa. lvii. 17; Luke xii. 15. Nor is the other influence of discontent—envy—to be less carefully guarded against; for not only does it engender angry feelings against others as we hear their praise, or watch their success, but it causes bitterness in our own hearts, and a disquietude of spirit marring our enjoyment of all sources of good or of happiness within our reach. Its effects in action may be seen in the first murder committed in the world, Gen. iv. 3, 8, in the sin of Miriam, Numb. xii, of Korah and his company, Numb. xvi. and in the case of the chief priests and Jewish rulers, who were led for envy to conspire to put our Lord to death, Matt. xxvii. 18.

Well may we be humbled, who cannot even think a good thought, or cherish a pure desire of our own free will, without the aid of God's grace, when we look upon this perfect law, and utter the prayer of our Liturgy "Lord have mercy upon us," for all our past transgression against these holy commands, known or unknown by us, but all open to Thee, (Ps. xix. 12, 13) and "write all these Thy laws in our hearts, we beseech Thee," that we may be enabled, by the indwelling power of the Holy Ghost, to think those things that be good, and by Thy merciful guiding to perform the same. For who is sufficient for

these things in himself? St. Paul has too truly described in Rom vii, the state of all of us, when he shows the law of sin in us, warring against the Divine will, and frustrating our efforts at obeying it; and our Church has wisely taught its youngest members, as each child concludes the summary of its duty to God and to its neighbour, based upon these laws, that "thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the commandments of God, and to serve Him without His special grace, which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer." He who is our perfect righteousness, and who came to fulfil the whole law for us, has briefly summed up the whole in these two sentences:—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind," and 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." To Him we must look as the great Exemplar of our lives, if we would let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in Heaven; and when all is done that we can accomplish by the help of His grace, still shall we have to look to Him to be our complete and only Saviour—for "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus iii. 5—7).

W. S.

SCRIPTURE PHILOLOGY.

No. II.—Idiomatic Words and Phrases.

Acts vii. 28. "The *Living* (Greek,) Oracles."

It frequently happens that epithets which are used by profane writers in a mere poetical sense, are by the inspired penmen employed in a much more real, literal, and expressive manner.

> "There is a *living* spirit in the lyre,
> A breath of music, and a soul of fire."

These lines give us an example of the merely figurative meaning of the word "*living*." In our Scripture the word signifies oftentimes something far more nearly related to *life*.

All through the Word, the Holy Spirit is described as the Author of life. Thus, even in the first of Genesis, the action of the Spirit of God, infusing life into inanimate matter, is intimated in the

allusion to the incubation of a dove, the warmth of whose breast vivifies the embryo. "The Spirit of God brooded on the face of the waters." And because He is this, the things which have immediately to do with the life of the soul, and are intimately connected with its spiritual existence, and with the life of God within us, are said to be "*living*." Thus Christ is "the Living Way," "the Living Bread," "the Living Water," "the Living Stone," by virtue of union to which "we also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house;" for it is from and out of Christ that we apostates, "dead in trespasses and sins," receive by the Spirit a new vitality. Hence in the Creed, in distinction from the Nestorian Church, we make the confession, "proceeding from the Father *and* the Son."

And not Christ only, but the ordinances of His appointment, and the means of grace are "living." The Gospel is not "a *dead* letter," as St. Paul terms the law. The Lord's Supper and Baptism are not dead rites; for the good Spirit of our Father, in and through these means of grace, enlightens, comforts, strengthens, and sanctifies our spirits or souls.

It is in this high and saving sense that the written Word of God is in some places named the lively or "living oracles."

But in reference to the SACRED SCRIPTURES, this name is used with still greater precision, as we shall best understand by inquiry into the nature of God's oracle.

An "*oracle*" means some truth spoken, or information given, immediately by God Himself to man in an audible manner—*words uttered by God, words in some human language.* God may, and does, communicate Himself to man by His actions. "He leaves not Himself without witness" as to His existence and attributes, by "giving us sun, and rain, and fruitful seasons." But "the voice of nature" is not the *oracle.* The oracle, or Divine communication in *language*, may be either by an outward or by an inward voice; and hence the general term inspiration is sometimes equivalent to divinely oracular, as we observe by a comparison of the several places in which the word oracle is used.

A "living oracle," then, is that Invisible and Eternal ONE who created and sustains all things, of whose existence we human beings have all an innate consciousness, developed into knowledge by our observation of all above, below, and around us, and by our reasoning faculties—the BEING whom we have never seen, or can see, but in whom we live, and move, and have our being, —*audibly speaking* to us. We should not, reasoning abstractedly, have supposed it improbable that our Creator should speak audibly to His creature; but because it is not now among the laws of nature,

as we call His uniform Providence, that He should do so, therefore the occurrence fills the soul of man with surprise and awe, yet not the souls of good and prepared men. When little Samuel heard the oracle, he did not tremble; for so like the voice of Eli did the Most High, in paternal tenderness, frame the sound of Samuel's name, coming from the penetralia of "the place where the ark of God was," that the holy boy hastened to his foster-father, and said, "Here am I, for thou calledst me." What is more natural, in the abstract thought, than that God, who has made us in His own image, and given us alone the gift of speech, should condescend to speak to us? And, accordingly, so used it to be in times of innocency. Imagine the pure, and lofty, and sublime look and character of Adam before the fall, and the fact appears still more natural. Here is a description of him by James Montgomery:—

> "A light was in his eye and in his speech
> A dialect of heaven no art could reach;
> For, oft of old, to him, among the trees,
> Had borne the voice of God, the evening breeze.
> Angels were wont their tones with his to blend,
> And talk with him as a familiar friend."

And what has been will be yet again, one day—we may be well sure of that—in some way or other.

However, in the mean time, these utterances of God have been preserved carefully, as it might well be supposed they would be. They have been committed to writing; the characters were drawn on the most enduring material—that is, to say, membrane or parchment—and the copies were multiplied indefinitely, till every Jewish synagogue possessed one; for it was the Jews who received "these lively oracles to give unto us;" and this custom continued till the art of printing superseded it, with unprecedented advantage.

The usual place where the Most High spake, unexpectedly on some occasions, to His ministers was His own sanctuary, whence, therefore, the sanctuary itself came to be named "the oracle," just as the building where the Church of Christ meet came, by metonymy, to be called the church; and this name our Milton has perpetuated, when he so sweetly sings of

> "Siloa's brook, that flow'd
> Fast by the Oracle of God."

And in regard to the high favour of procuring an audience with God in His sanctuary, whether the tabernacle or temple, where the ark of God stood, that is to say, His throne, which His glory filled, and which is called, also, in one place (1 Chron. xxviii. 18) His

chariot, God prescribed a form, ceremony, and dress, which the chief minister must wear, when he was justified by circumstances in asking express directions, or putting direct questions in behalf of the holy nation to their God and King. The dress was an ephod, or linen garment, to which was fastened an ornament and badge, representing, in "lively stones," therein set, "the twelve tribes," which lively, precious stones or gems were thence named "*Urim* and *Thummim*," or, in English, "lights and perfections;" for as the stones were bright and perfect, so were, figuratively, and ought to have been, and professed to be really, the Church and people of God.

Now, when the priest, so arrayed, went to ask and receive counsel from God, this was called consulting the Oracle.

The Jews have, in later times (for the oracle did not enrich the second temple), written many fanciful things as to *how* the answer was given to the priest. The truth, next to certain, is either that he heard an articulate reply from God, like that to which Samuel and Elijah were favoured to listen, or that he himself became, as it were, his own informant, being then and there inwardly inspired and moved by the Holy Ghost.

Such revelations, therefore, were the simplest and most unmixed divine, lively, or living oracles; and they are called living, because they never become "a dead letter"—they accomplish God's will and purpose from day to day, year to year, and age to age. Through the influence of the Holy Ghost, they are living spirits, as it were, like the eye-winged cherubim about that ark, as it is written,—

> "He maketh His spirits as heralds to go;
> His lightnings to serve, we see also prest;
> His will to accomplish they run to and fro,
> To save or consume things, as seemeth Him best."

Similar in meaning is the language of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews concerning the Holy Scriptures; for he writes, that "The Word of God is quick or living, and powerful, even to the dividing asunder the soul and spirit, and the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

And language like this can only be employed here with propriety, but upon the admission that the Holy Spirit is ever attendant upon "the Word," and where He will ("the wind bloweth where it listeth") employs it to the conviction, preparatory, it may be, to the conversion and purifying of the heart.

From this sublime name, then given to the Word of God, and particularly to the epithet "living," which is added to the word

"oracle," how obvious is it that the humble Christian should listen with reverence, with delight, and with hope to everything so communicated; that he should esteem the Gospel as most precious, and capable of restoring his strength, increasing his faith, imparting more knowledge, and, in a word, qualifying him to "grow in grace." Nor let him be afraid that God will speak one word *to him*, however conscious of unworthiness, that will not forward his salvation. Good men there have been—John Bunyan was one of them—who have dreaded, even for months together, to open their Bibles, for fear of some text that should strike them to the heart, so quick and powerful was the Word to them; but when they have lived to get over this time of weakness, how thankful they have been for past experiences! And does not one oracle itself say, "To this man will I look; to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Look up, fainting heart, thy faith shall make thee whole.

We are reluctant to close this paper without saying a word on the *heathen oracles*—their existence, their falsehood, and their close.

If there is any supernatural fact most fully and generally attested by the heathen writers it is this, that there were oracles among them—that a priestess, sitting on a tripod, became "filled with the god," and gave utterance, at times, to some strange and dark sentence in reply to enquirers, which the spirit possessing her communicated through her organs of speech. We think such a thing very possible; nor is there anything more wonderful in it than what is related in the acts of a certain woman who had a spirit of Python (Greek), and was heard to cry about the Apostles such a testimony as procured their imprisonment, and, but for the Lord's interference, might then and there have ended in their death. Nor does this Scripture stand alone—several others imply as much. As to the *lying* character of *these* oracles, that was to be expected from the father of them: and again, when they related to *the future*, they could not but be ambiguously worded, if the evil spirit wished to preserve his dominion, and keep up his reputation "in the dark places of the earth:" for God himself challenges the idols of the heathen who were the representatives of evil spirits resorting to their shrines, saying, "let them show us things to come."

However, when the Lord came, in Christendom at least these heathen oracles became silent, as Plutarch relates; who says, in Tiberius' reign, an extraordinary voice was heard at one oracular seat loudly lamenting, "Great Pan is dead!" and if any of our friends wishes to read, and are strangers to it, the most graphic, and intense description that can be conceived almost of this super-

natural event, he has only to turn to Milton's Hymn to the Nativity, and commence with the stanza,—

> "The oracles are dumb: * * * *
> "E'en the chill marble seems to sweat,
> "As each peculiar power foregoes his wonted seat!"

Gumfreston, Tenby. G. E. S

THOUGHTS ON RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS.

SUBSTANCE and SHADOW, or FAITH and ITS IDEA.

It is usual to describe and define a true and false faith in these terms,—living and dead faith; a faith of the understanding, and a faith of the heart; faith with, and faith without works; an historic and a Divine faith, and so on. And again we have several interesting definitions of true faith in good writers; there is one in Pascal's Private Thoughts; Jeremy Taylor gives us another good one; and Mrs. Beecher Stow has well hit off the terms in which saving faith, —that faith which worketh by love,—may be described and distinguished from its counterfeits. But above and before all these we have St. Paul's definition, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen."

Definitions of faith of a less laboured kind are innumerable; and how should it be otherwise, since faith holds the chief place after Christ Himself, in the covenant of our salvation?

A true notion of faith, therefore, must always be a desideratum to the soul. Hence it is that persons, whose faith is defective or fallacious, are most of all inclined to kick against a true definition of it, because the true conception undermines a false hope, and destroys an ill-grounded confidence. "Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?" said Micah to the wandering Danites who had deprived him of his Teraphim, and removed, as he believed, the safeguard of his house.

Now there is one fallacy about faith which, in whole or in *part* possesses many minds; it consists in setting up the *idea* for the *reality*, the *shadow* for the *substance*.

We may convey our meaning thus; we have as vivid and real a notion, idea, or "view," as it is called, of a fiction and nonentity, as we have of a reality; and we may know it to be a fiction all the time, and that it has no real existence now, and never had. For example, who has not read Robinson Crusoe, and does not remember the foot-print in the sand which dissipated at once the

honest sailor's idea of the security of his desolate island? How palpable that foot-print! and not less so our mental impression or *idea* of it; and yet we none of us believe the thing; we know Robinson Crusoe to be a novel of Daniel Defoe's invention. And is it not probable, nay, certain, that we may take in the descriptions of Gospel fact in the same way, and have a very vivid and clear image and impression on the mind of what Christ did and suffered, and of Christian truth also, as of justification for instance, and yet all the while there shall be no real belief of these facts? The *idea* and imagination of such great and invaluable things gives us pleasure at the time, it is true; as the imagining the discovery and surprise of Robinson Crusoe, on the occasion alluded, to gives us pleasure; but for all that, who knows, however he may suspect it, that he has mistaken the shadow for "the substance of the things hoped for?" The real Christian alone knows that *he* is under no such mistake, for he is "not ignorant of Satan's devices," and has "proof" in the practical workings of his own faith that it is real, as St. Paul says, Rom. v. 4, especially if he has been any time "walking with God;" but the deceived man does not so know his faith.

Against this delusion about faith, which may be total in some, or only partial in others, a very good warning and safeguard may be found where many would little think to find it, namely, in the Ethics of Aristotle, who, had he been enlightened by the Gospel, would not have been second even to St. Paul.

He thus defines between principle, which, with the Christian, is his faith—and opinion, which may stand for notion, or view, or idea:—

"PRINCIPLE *versus* OPINION.

"By having good or bad principles, we are good or bad men; but our opinions make us neither good nor bad. Our principles make us take up a thing, or avoid it; our opinions pronounce upon its nature or qualities; but opinion does not pursue an object, or fly from it.

"The excellence of principle is goodness; that of opinion is (only) truth."

Ethics iii. 2.

ON ROMANS VIII. 19—23.

"κτισις—OR THE CREATURE."

I do not think the brute creation is here meant. Nor do I think the human body is meant; for the human body, distinct from the rational soul, is not a creature, but only a part of a creature, and it is the soul that "groans." Besides, the bodies of believers

are mentioned separately afterwards. In Mark xvi. 15, the command to preach the Gospel to every creature means every human being only.

But to offer my view of the passage, *seriatim*—We know, in England, since the Reformation, a notion of *God's election* has prevailed among some of us, which is certainly not exactly the notion of St. Paul, who calls the professing Churches the elect, again and again, as do the rest of the Apostles, and Clement in his Apostolic Epistle. I grant, if you will, that these Churches are so called, because they contain "the very elect," so to speak. Well, looking back to the first annunciation of God's purpose, after the Pentecost, it is written, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, *even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*" And again, "Simeon hath declared unto you, how God, at the first, did visit the Gentiles, to *take out of* them a people for His name." Now, these are the elect, the elect professing Churches and Christians. If half of them are false professors, that makes nothing against the use of the name to the collective body, as the same name, elect, was applied, *for other reasons*, to the whole nation of the Jews of old. *Here* the Apostle is speaking of THESE ELECT, and to them. "Even we ourselves, who have the *first-fruits* of the Spirit," he says, thus distinguishing them from whom? Why, doubtless, from the rest of mankind, who are to have the *after-fruits* of the Spirit. And this remnant of mankind constitutes "the creature," or "the creation"—the human creature, which is "made subject to vanity;" for man walketh in "the vanity of his mind," as also in a vain show and shadow.

There is but one other step to take us to the conclusion of our argument; it is this—Does mankind, *unchristened* mankind, "groan and travail" for the deliverance of God's elect? Who can doubt it that has read the best of the Greek and Latin authors? Who can forget the Dialogues of Plato? or who fail to see that an unknown and unheard-of Redeemer is "the desire of every nation," and of every oppressed human heart; and that human nature yearns for what the elect have received in part already, and shall get completely, when they get what yet remains for them—"to wit, the redemption of the body."

Modern notions of election are not identical with St. Paul's in several particulars. St. Paul's elect had false professors among them, ours are exclusively true believers; St. Paul's elect were a visible body, ours invisible. And our having refined upon St. Paul as to language tends to throw a shade upon much, otherwise clear, sanctifying truth of the Word of God.

G. S.

The Teacher in his School.

A LESSON FOR A BIBLE CLASS

On Justification.

Teacher. The subject for which I ask your best attention this evening, is one which, perhaps, may seem a little difficult at first, but which I hope will, nevertheless, prove interesting, and by God's blessing, profitable, to you. It is that expressed by the word, Justification. And I need scarcely say to you how important it is to us all to have right views on this subject, giving as it does, an answer to the solemn question which touches the salvation of every one of us, "How can man be just with God?" Now will you tell me what you understand by the word justification?

Scholars. To be made holy.

T. Not exactly. Will some one else give me the meaning? No answer.

Perhaps you do not find it very easy to put your *ideas* on the subject into *words*. Justification is a word or term taken from proceedings in a court of law. It supposes a *law*, an *accused party*, and a *judge*. A man, for instance, is accused, we will say of stealing, before one of our English courts, who shall be called to give evidence?

S. Witnesses.

T. When the witnesses have said what they have to say, if the man is proved innocent, what is the office of the judge?

S. To set him free.

T. But before he is let go, what does the judge declare before all who are present?

S. That he has not done it. Not guilty.

T. Then the judge's office in this case is to declare the innocence of the accused party. And what may be said of that man?

S. He is justified.

T. Or if, on the contrary, he is proved guilty—what then?

S. The judge will say he is guilty.

T. And what follows breaking the law?

S. Punishment.

T. When the judge, then, has declared a man guilty, what must follow?

S. He must go to prison. Punishment.

T. And what shall we say of that man?

S. He is condemned.

T. Now I think you will understand this meaning of justification. "*Justification is a judicial act*," that is, the act of a judge, "*by which the innocence of the person justified is declared.*" What is justification?

S. The act of a judge.

T. Well, what is declared by it?

S. The innocence of the person justified.

T. Now, in the relation of man to God, what is the *law* under which he is placed?

S. The Bible.

T. God gives us His law in the Bible, but what do we particularly mean when we speak of the *law of God* as binding upon us?

S. The five books of Moses. The twentieth chapter of Exodus. The ten commandments.

T. Yes, the ten commandments. What does this law require of us?

S. That we should mind it. That we should do it.

T. What word do we use to express doing as we are bid?

S. Obedience.

T. Then the law of God requires—obedience.

T. What *kind* of obedience? No answer. What is God in His character?

S. Holy.

T. Yes, God is perfectly holy, and therefore what must His law be?

S. Perfectly holy, too.

T. And if God is perfect, and His law is perfect, what must be the *kind* of obedience required?

S. Perfect obedience.

T. Let us take a proof or two from God's own word. Turn to Lev. xviii. 5. (Scholars read.) And now look at Rom. x. 5. (The passage read). In both these verses we have *life* spoken of, but what is connected with it?

S. Doing.

T. Yes. "The man that *doeth* these things," that is, keeps the law perfectly, "shall live in them." Look now at James ii. 10. (Verse read.)

We have here the consequences of a single sin. If we offend in *one point*, what are we declared to be?

S. Guilty of all.

T. Perhaps this will help you to understand what this verse means. A man has occasion to go down into a very deep well—he is to be let down by a chain. You know what a chain is made of?

S. A great many links.

T. There may be several hundred links in the chain, and all of them perfect and strong except *one*. The chain is let go and the man begins to descend. As soon as the weight falls upon the link which is not perfect, what will happen?

S. It will break.

T. Yes; and what will be the effect of its breaking?

S. He will fall. The man will be killed.

T. You see the man's fall, and perhaps his death will be as certain if *one* link breaks—

S. As if they all broke.

T. So one sin brings us in guilty before God; by one sin we fall, and must perish unless God saves us. And what is the penalty of God's broken law?

S. Death. Eternal punishment.

T. Look at Ezek. xviii. 4. (Scholars read.) And again at Gal. iii. 10. (Verse read by scholars.) These two verses give us our awful heritage—what is it?

S. Death and the curse.

T. Some years ago, on a great public occasion, a celebrated man rose to address his countrymen, and in reply to some charges which had been made against him, he held up his hands in the vast assembly, and exclaimed, "These hands are clean." But when we are accused of breaking God's law, what must we confess ourselves?

S. We are not clean. We must confess our sins.

T. Turn to David's prayer, Ps. cxliii. 2. (Scholars read.) And now to the Apostle's words, Rom. iii. 19, 20. (Passage read.)

T. Now you see the point to which we have come. If a man proves his *innocence*, what must the judge do?

S. Justify him.

T. And does the man feel particularly obliged to the judge for doing so?

S. He will not feel obliged at all.

T. Why not?

S. Because he had not done wrong. Because it was his right.

T. Yes; the *innocent* may *claim* justification, but what are we in God's sight?

S. Guilty. Sinners.

T. What is our *right*, then—our just desert, as breakers of God's law?

S. Punishment. Death.

T. Then the question returns upon us with solemn force, "*How* can man be just with God?" Unless God had Himself found a way, and Himself made that way known to us, it would have been a question that never could have received an answer. But let us read His own answer, which is given us in Rom. iii. 21—28. (The passage read.)

We cannot attempt to search thoroughly into these words. To do so would require hours instead of the few minutes we have to give. We must just take out those parts which bear

most on the subject we have in hand. And here see what it is that justifies us. Look at the twenty-first verse, and you will see what the apostle says is *manifested*, or made known.

S. "The righteousness of God."

T. In the twenty-second verse—

S. "Even the righteousness of God."

T. The twenty-fourth verse—

S. "Being justified freely by His grace."

T. The twenty-sixth verse—

S. "To declare I say, at this time His righteousness."

T. As far, then, as *merit* is concerned, by what are we justified?

S. By the righteousness of God.

T. Who worked out that righteousness for us?

S. Jesus Christ.

T. And how did He work it out for us?

S. By dying on the cross for us.

T. But He did something else for us besides dying.

S. He lived for us.

T. Yes; He obeyed the law which we have broken, and after His death what did He do?

S. Rose again. Ascended into heaven.

T. And what is He doing there?

S. Pleading for us.

T. And because He lived, and died, and rose again, we may now be justified,

S. By the righteousness of Christ.

T. In other words, by—

S. The righteousness of God.

T. Turn now to 2 Cor. v. 21. (Scholars read.)

We have here an exchange clearly revealed. Christ stood in our place, bore our punishment. What does the verse state?

S. He was made sin for us.

T. Yes: not actual sin, for He "knew no sin," but our sin was counted as His, was reckoned as upon Him. And His obedience and death, in one word, His *righteousness* is counted as ours, is reckoned upon us, if we are "in Him," for what does the verse declare?

S. "We are made the righteousness of God."

T. And to this agree the words of the prophet in Jer. xxiii. 6. (Scholars read.)

There is a hymn which, perhaps, some of you know, which brings this subject very clearly before us. After speaking of God's knowledge of us, and of our own sinfulness, it goes on to say,—

"Since therefore I can scarcely bear,
What in myself I see,
How vile and black must I appear,
Most Holy God, to Thee.

But since my Saviour stands between,
In garments dyed in blood,
'Tis He instead of me is seen,
When I approach to God.

Thus though a sinner, I am safe,
He pleads before the throne,
His life and death on my behalf,
And calls *my* sins *His own*.

What wondrous love, what mysteries,
In this appointment shine,
My breaches of the law are His,
And His obedience mine!"

So you see as far as *merit* is concerned, or as we may call it *meritoriously*, we are justified by the righteousness of Christ—by the merit of His obedience His death, His intercession,—counted as ours, *given over to us*. But, now, suppose we compare this righteousness to a broad and flowing river, which has abundance of water, fed from an ever-living spring. At a little distance from this river stands a large city, the inhabitants of which want the water for their daily use and comfort. What will be necessary before they can enjoy it?

S. They must go to it.

T. But they want it in their houses?

S. They must lay pipes.

T. Yes; there must be a channel dug, or pipes laid to convey the water from the river into the houses. If again, I offer you a gift freely and frankly, what is necessary on your part?

S. To thank you.

T. Yes; but thanking me would not

make the gift yours—what else must you do?

S. Put out our hands and take it.

T. Well, now—Christ's righteousness is full and broad as a mighty stream; but how is it brought near to us—what is the channel or pipe?

No answer.

T. God offers us the gift of righteousness, what is the power, the *hand*, as it were, by which we lay hold of it?

S. Faith. Belief.

T. Yes; faith is the *channel* through which it runs, the *hand* by which, as an instrument, it is made our own. Look at Rom. iii. 22, 25 again. (Verses read). And now at Rom. v. 1. Thus you see the *merit* by which we are justified is Christ's, the instrument—

S. Is faith.

T. If you had your Prayer Books with you I should ask you to turn to the 11th Article. You know the Articles are a declaration of what is believed and held by the Church of England, and we should compare them with the Bible, and we shall then find they agree. The 11th Article speaks of justification in these words (Article quoted). You know against what false Church the Church of England protested at the Reformation?

S. The Church of Rome.

T. Yes; and one of the chief errors of that fallen Church is on this subject. She even pronounces those *accursed* who teach or say that we are justified freely by Christ's righteousness through faith, yet where are we taught this?

S. In the Bible.

T. The Bible teaches us that we are justified as far as *merit* is concerned by Christ's righteousness, and what does it teach us is the instrument?

S. Faith in Jesus Christ.

T. In marking the difference between the justification of the *innocent*, and that which God gives of His grace to the *guilty* for the sake of another, we saw that an innocent man would not thank the judge because he declared him so, it is his *right*, but in our case what always follows a belief in God's love, in Christ's atonement?

S. Thanks. We should be glad.

T. There is a word which expresses thankful love to those who shew us great kindness?

S. To be grateful. Gratitude.

T. Quite right; and if we believe God's love to us what will spring up in our hearts?

S. Love to God.

T. And how will gratitude and love show themselves?

S. By trying to please.

T. Turn now to one other passage, James ii. 24 (Verse read). The Apostle James is shewing that the faith which does not try to please God is no real faith. Read the 14th verse. (Girls read). What kind of a man is spoken of here?

S. A man who says he has faith.

T. Yes; he *says* so, but if he has not works, if his faith does not shew itself in his life, of what may we be sure?

S. That he has not faith. He has not true faith.

T. Exactly so; if a person is justified how must it be known to others?

S. By his works.

T. Yes; the life of a Christian *justifies* his profession, that is, declares it to be a true one to those around him. We may sum up the subject thus:

We are justified *meritoriously*—by the righteousness of Christ.

We are justified *instrumentally*, or as by an instrument—by faith.

We are justified *declaratively*, that is, declared to be justified persons in the sight of others—by works.

T. And now before I close this lesson, I must just remind you that justification is a *starting-point* and not a *resting-place*. Suppose you want to go to some place, and you have wandered out of the road, what do you want first?

S. To get back to the right road.—A Guide.

T. Suppose some one meets you, and puts you on the right road, and says, Now you must go straight on, what must you do?

S. Go on.

T. Yes; when you have got into the right road you must walk on and on till you come where you wish to be. Now justification is like bringing you back to the right way, it is turning you round with your face towards Zion But is all done then?

S. No.

T. What remains?

S. We must go on.

T. What do we need to make us fit for heaven?

S. The Holy Spirit. To be made holy.

T. Yes; justification is like giving us new life, but if we have life what must we do?

S. Work.

T. Yes; we must work, we must fight, we must strive; when God sets our heart at liberty it is that we may run the way of His commandments. There is no such thing as justification without sanctification. We may study them separately; they are perfectly distinct, but you cannot have one without the other. If you are justified by God's grace you are yielding yourselves to God in grateful service and entire obedience. Take home then these questions, dear young friends, and ask them of your own hearts before God when you are alone with Him. Am I conscious of my own guilt and danger? Have I ever knelt before God and prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner?" Am I trusting in Jesus? Have I reached out the hand of faith? Have I caught hold of Him with my heart? Am I living to His praise? Glorifying Him in my daily life by truthfulness, humility, obedience, gentleness, in a word by striving in all things to be *like Christ?* If you can say humbly and sincerely, "Yes" to these questions, then all through your life you may take up the Apostle's triumphant words, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth? Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." You may then rejoice to sing,

"Thy righteousness O Christ,
Alone can cover me;
No righteousness avails,
Save that which is of Thee."

"Thy righteousness, O Christ,
Can clothe and beautify,
I wrap it round my soul,
In this I'll live and die."

Dora.

[The subject of Justification is undoubtedly a difficult one to make plain to a Sunday school class; but we think our readers will agree with us that the Author of this Lesson has displayed great judgment and skill in arranging the plan of it, and in the manner in which the doctrine has been defined and illustrated. As a specimen of the mode in which the foundation doctrines of the faith can be brought within the comprehension of our scholars, and made practically useful, this Lesson is of great value. ED.]

LESSONS ON THE LITURGY, FOR BIBLE CLASSES.

LESSON XLI.

THE LITANY, *continued.*

IN our previous petitions we have specially prayed for those who are in danger or affliction,—for sufferers either in spiritual or temporal things, and have offered up the general petition "for all men," lest any should have escaped our thoughts. Now, that we may set no limit to our supplications by any want of charity, we pray particularly for "our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers," asking for them the same blessings we seek for ourselves.

Have *we* any enemies? Perhaps not. Some persons live quiet lives, and children especially, knowing nothing of any real enemies or persecutors, and having no one to take away their character by tale-bearing. But it is not so with all. Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, early found enemies, even amongst their brethren. David was only a youth when Saul tried to kill him. And slandering is not come to an end now, for remember how often *you* are tempted to speak evil of others, to blame them heavily for trifling faults, or to deny their really good qualities. If others so treat you, how does the Bible direct you to repay them? Just in the spirit of this prayer: see Ex. xxiii. 4, 5; Prov. xxv. 21, 22; Matt. v. 44; Rom. xii. 20. Remember what Stephen did for his murderers, and our Saviour's prayer for His, and if any ill-use you pray that God would forgive them, and turn their hearts, *i.e.*, give them repentance.

Then follows a prayer which very usefully reminds us that we owe to God the supply of our daily sustenance, which we are very apt to forget. "The kindly fruits of the earth," wholesome, pleasant, and adapted to our wants, are His gift. Remember how varied the productions of the earth are; you can scarcely count up all the kinds of fruits and vegetables which we in this country enjoy; and if you were to visit foreign lands, you would find great numbers of eatable fruits such as you had never seen grow here (dates, cocoa-nuts, yams, oranges, lemons, figs, almonds, &c.), and all these things have their seasons. God's wisdom has fixed a due or suitable time for every crop; and think what a good thing it is that seasons and harvests come in regular order! All these are God's gifts; and one of His modes of punishing a guilty country is by famine and bad harvests. See Deut. xxviii. 15, 17, 18, 38—40, 42; Ezek. xiv. 13; Joel i. 4, 10—12, 17, 18: Amos vii. 1, 2.

Our last petition is for spiritual blessings,—the things necessary to our souls, in order to bring them to eternal happiness,—repentance, forgiveness of sin, and amendment of life by the assistance of God's Holy Spirit.

Repentance (*true* repentance, and not mere remorse without love, such as Judas felt) is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, see Acts v. 31. It is the first turning of the sinner's heart towards God, like the poor prodigal's feeling, when he said, "I will arise and go to my Father."

"Negligences," *i.e.*, duties neglected, such as we mean in the confession, "we have left undone those things we ought to have done." Children and young people do not think enough of these; they ought to pray constantly, morning and evening, and to read their Bible daily; they ought to obey and help their parents; they ought to thank God, to serve Him, to worship Him, at home and in His house. But how often these things are left undone, neglected!

Then there are sins of "ignorance," and this is often our own fault, for we might know better if we took more pains to learn. We may well ask God to forgive all these.

At the conclusion of all these petitions, we especially pray for the Holy Spirit's help to enable us to amend our lives according to God's holy word, for if this be not done, all our intercessions and prayers will avail nothing, for God will not hear or answer impenitent sinners. We can do no good thing without the Spirit of God; so good a man as St. Paul acknowledged this of himself, Rom. vii. 18, 19. If, then, we feel that we ought to amend or improve our lives, according to God's word (and unless we do we cannot go to heaven, Heb. xii. 14), let us seek earnestly the precious gift of God's Holy Spirit. It is a happy thing for us to know how freely that gift is promised to those who ask it, Luke xi. 13.

LESSON XLII.

THE LITANY, *continued.*

WE have now concluded the general supplications of the Litany, and we follow them by several short verses and responses, especially addressed to our blessed Saviour, as the great Mediator and Intercessor, beseeching Him to hear our prayers, urging alike His Divinity and His humanity, in which He suffered for our redemption.

We speak to Him as the Lamb of God, in the words of John the Baptist (John i. 29), and, as the Son of God, we ask Him to obtain for us a gracious answer to our supplications, to grant us His peace (see John xiv. 27) and to have mercy upon us. We repeat these words to show how earnestly we desire that for which we ask,—but we do not repeat them often enough to make it a vain repetition.

The three petitions for mercy, preceding the Lord's Prayer, are addressed to each in turn of the blessed persons of the Holy Trinity, like those after the Creed.

Then follows the Lord's Prayer, a mark of another change in the mode of service, and used here more particularly to show that all human compositions, such as the prayers we have been considering, are (even the best of them) imperfect, and only receive life and value from this Divine form, on which account we sum up all our petitions in the very words which Christ has Himself taught us.

In the two following verses we seek the same mercy—that God would not treat us *as we deserve* (Ps. cxxx. 3, 4), for the expression "*after* our sins" is here used in the old-fashioned sense of the word, meaning "according to." The words are those of Ps. ciii. 10, turned into a prayer. And what a needful one! for *what* do we deserve? God is not careless about sin. He notices everything wrong, and He is angry with the wicked every day (Ps. vii. 11). Do you not feel that He has cause to be angry with *you* every day? If you honestly examine yourselves day by day you must feel this; and if so, surely you will say, from the very bottom of your heart, "Deal not with us after our sins."

God does not act so. The words of Ps. ciii. are the language of many a grateful Christian, with whom God has graciously borne, for many a day. But do not forget that there is a limit and end even to God's long-suffering. The sad day will come to many when they cry for mercy, but too late. *Now* is the day of salvation,—now you may come and be saved; but I dare not say that to-morrow will

be time enough, for you may die to-night. Remember, then, that there are such texts as Prov. i. 24—28; Zech. vii. 13; Matt. xxv. 11, 12.

Now let us read the beautiful prayer that follows—the prayer of those who feel their guilt and danger, and seek help of a merciful Father. Let me ask you, are yours contrite hearts? Are you among those who are sorrowful? No doubt the sorrow is such as that which our Saviour speaks of in Matt. v. 4. For what would a contrite heart sigh? What would any one mourning for sin desire? Pardon and peace. Read David's words in Ps. li. 8, 12; and in that Psalm, verse 17, you see what David knew of God's mercy—words which are used for the commencement of this prayer.

Then we ask two petitions, 1st, that God would help us to pray; 2nd, that God would deliver us from the dangers we fear; and for this deliverance we undertake to thank God in His holy Church, *i. e.*, to acknowledge his goodness to us by an open profession of our obligation to Him, before His Church, which here means His people.

But 1st. Why do we ask God to help us to pray? The Apostles asked Christ to teach them to pray; and though we may think we are sure to ask for what we want, that is not true in religious things (Rom. viii. 26). For instance, a proud man needs humility, but he is not very likely to feel how much he needs it. But if he asks God to help him to pray, God may show him what he needs.

But the words here especially apply to those oppressed by trouble, and such troubles as those we find spoken of in the second petition.

2nd. What dangers, then, do we ask to be saved from? Such as crafty (cunning) men, or evil spirits, work against us. Wicked men often seek to lead others astray. Satan is always on the watch to deceive us, and at some times and in some places there are downright persecutions, such as arose at Stephen's death, Acts viii. 1, 3, 4, and see Acts xii.

From all these God can deliver us. Who can hurt those whom He protects? See 1 Pet. iii. 13. He has often delivered His people from their persecutors, as He delivered Peter, Acts xii.

And remember one thing more. God may sometimes see fit to let His servants perish under persecution. If ever that be your lot, recollect how Christ endured it, and think of the glorious promise in Rev. ii. 10.

LESSON XLIII.

The Litany, *continued.*

After the prayer which we read and talked about in our last lesson, come some more versicles, in which the same request is continued in another form, that of alternate supplications between the minister and the people, taken from Psalms xliv. 26, and lxxix. 9.

They are all (except the doxology) prayers such as we should utter when in distress or fear; prayers for deliverance from enemies—not earthly, but spiritual ones.

Who are our spiritual enemies? We speak in the Church Catechism of "our ghostly enemy," which is the same thing. It means Satan and all wicked spirits. They are bitter enemies to all people. Remember how Satan tempted Eve, Job, David, Peter, and even tried to lead our Lord Himself to sin, though there his utmost efforts failed.

Not till we reach heaven shall we be beyond all temptation; *now* we are open to it at all times, and in every place. And can we resist those enemies ourselves? No, indeed, for what we say of ourselves in the Collect for the 2nd Sunday in Lent, is just what the Bible teaches us. Read Prov. xxviii. 26. They who think they can resist temptation in their own strength will find themselves sadly mistaken. Peter said, "I will not deny Thee," yet he fell.

Then, in these verses, besides praying for protection from enemies, we pray that God would look graciously and pitifully on our afflictions and sorrows, and forgive our sins. Asking God to look graciously upon our afflictions is asking Him to remove them, and to comfort us. When God threatens to hide his face, and so not to look upon people, that means that He will not care for them, and will not forgive or help them. See Deut. xxxi. 17; Is. i. 15: viii. 17; Ezek. xxxix. 23. And now contrast with these the gracious promises in 2 Chron. vii. 15, and learn from it that whilst God will hear *everywhere* the prayer of the broken and contrite heart, there is an especial blessing to those who, in his own temple, thus plead with Him.

And "the sorrows of our hearts"—What are they in your case? Peter wept bitterly after he had denied Christ; David mourned heavily after he had fallen. *Those* are the sorrows meant; have you ever felt such after you have done wrong?

To whom in these verses do we pray? Chiefly to Christ, the Lord, the God, the Son of David. And then on what grounds do you ask for mercy? For His name's sake; for His honour; because He has helped "our fathers" before us; and because we trust in Him. These are four good reasons.

I. For His name's sake; which is, in other words, for His own sake, as the name of God is often in the Bible put for God Himself, as in Ps. xxix. 2. This then, is asking God to save us for His own sake, as if it would be a delight to Him to do so. And is not this true? Let us read what He Himself has said, Is. xliii. 25; xlviii. 9, 11.

II. For His honour. What does this mean? Is it any honour to God to save His people? God's glory is perfect, and needs no addition from us; but He Himself is pleased to say that He will receive fresh honour and glory from the salvation of sinners; that is to say, that men and angels will honour and praise Him the more for His power, wisdom, love, and condescension. See Rev. iv. 9, 11; v. 13; vii. 12; and Ps. viii. 5; Heb. ii. 7, 9. And surely if we are thus redeemed and delivered, and brought at last to heaven, we shall honour and praise Him by whom alone we could thus enter there as conquerors.

III. Because we have heard from our fathers (which here means not only our forefathers, but other men in old times) who feared God, that He did noble works for deliverance, for them and for men before them. So would Noah's sons tell their children how God had saved them in the ark; so would the children of those Israelites who crossed over Jordan hear of that great miracle. (Josh. iv. 20–22). God has wrought many mercies for this country—such as the Reformation, the destruction of the Spanish armada, the defeat of the Popish plot, the spread of the Bible, the prevalence of freedom, and long seasons of peace and prosperity. God's former mercies are properly used as a plea for more: compare Ps. iv. 1. And from them also we learn that He is both able and willing to help.

IV. Because we trust in Him. If we are but His children, then the more we trust Him, the more He is pleased, and the safer shall we be. See the precepts Ps. xxxvii. 3; Prov. iii. 5; Is. xxvi. 4; and the promises Ps. xxxii. 10; xxxiv. 22; xl. 4; cxxv. 1; Prov. xxix. 25.

When next in church you repeat these words, remember who and what your enemies are—remember your own weakness—but remember also that you have an Almighty Saviour, ready both now and ever to hear and to help you. Trust in Him.

LESSON XLIV.

The Litany, *continued.*

Once more the minister says, "Let us pray," and after the alternate sentences we spoke of in our last lesson, he utters a prayer for the congregation and himself.

This prayer is something like the sentences—for it is the prayer of the distressed and the fearful. But there is one difference worth noticing. The sentences speak of danger from enemies or outward troubles; this prayer speaks of infirmities (*i.e.*, weakness, or frailties, as they are called in the Collect for 4th Sunday after Epiphany) and inward guilt, and the evils or punishments that we have righteously (*i.e.*, justly—God is righteous or just in punishing sin) deserved. The sentences plead for safety—this prayer for pardon and for grace to live a holy life.

Ever remember that these things must go together. If God shields us from our spiritual enemies it is on purpose that we may live a godly life. Compare Luke i. 74. What do we mean by the infirmities we confess in this prayer? Infirmity means weakness. When an old man can scarcely walk, he is said to be growing infirm. This is bodily weakness. And so was Eli's blindness an infirmity.

But there are weaknesses of the soul: as Moses' fit of anger—Peter's cowardice on the sea, and in the judgment hall—Jonah's disobedience, and then his angry murmuring because God spared Nineveh. Ill temper is an infirmity, so is indolence, though these are also downright faults. Then again we may sometimes feel disinclined to pray, or weary of reading the Bible.

These are all things that we ought to grieve over and watch against; but in this prayer we beseech God to look mercifully upon them, as though He loved rather to forgive than to punish every fault. Remember that God *does* see and notice every fault; but He does not treat us as we deserve. If He dealt so with us, we should perish at once before His anger. Read Ps. cxxx. 3, 4; and see David's prayer, Ps. cxliii. 2.

But all such infirmities and sins righteously or justly deserve punishment; and that punishment is here called "evils," for those things which we call misfortunes or troubles, are often God's chastenings for sin. God punished the Israelites by many plagues, and by bad harvests, by want of rain, by locusts, and other destructive insects (Joel ii. 24, &c.), by captivity in Babylon, and lastly, by the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews over the world. These were indeed evils, and justly deserved.

Are we better than they? We have even more advantages, and if we refuse or neglect God's mercy, our guilt is the greater. There are many faults in us that should make us pray, as in this prayer, that God would not treat us as we deserve.

And if we *are* punished, if troubles do come upon us (man is born to trouble, Job v. 7), we pray that we may put our trust in God's mercy, not thinking that our own arm, or any other man could deliver us, but looking to God alone; see what is said of this in Jer. xvii. 5—8.

Remember also, that we are sure sometimes to need these troubles; see Heb. xi 6, 7, 10, 11; and *there* we learn that God designs such troubles to bring about in us that which we then go on to pray for, *viz.*, that we should serve Him evermore ("all the days of my life") in holiness and pureness of living, so as to give honour to Him who so works in us.

Let me ask you whether you are conscious how many infirmities you have—you feel that they justly deserve punishment? And is it your earnest desire to live more truly as a servant of God? None ever really and heartily prayed this prayer, in Christ's name as their only advocate (no saints or angels) without receiving a blessing.

After this prayer come in some occasional ones, which we will speak of in our next lesson, and then a concluding prayer of St. Chrysostom, which we will now read.

You see it is a prayer that what we have been asking of God, our desires and our petitions, may be granted and fulfilled. We say that we have offered those united prayers (for that is the meaning here of the word "common," and the Book of Common Prayer expresses the same, *viz.*: prayers in which we should all join) with one accord, that is, agreement, and that God has given us grace to do so, which should remind us that we cannot pray aright, without God's help ("Lord teach us to pray"). Then we speak of the precious promise given by our Saviour to those, few or many, two or three, or 2,000 or 3,000, who *join* in prayer: see Matt. xviii. 20.

But there is one thing more to notice. We pray that God would answer our prayers only so far as may be most expedient (or useful, or advantageous) for us, since He knoweth what we really need, and what is best for us, far more than we can tell. Suppose a sick man prayed to be made well, when God knew it to be happier for him to die! If the man added such a prayer as this, he would do right.

Yes! let us bring all our wants to God, but always add "Thy will be done." But two things we cannot do wrong to ask for, and they are in this prayer—a knowledge of God's truth whilst we live, and an entrance into eternal life when we die; for *those* blessings God freely offers to all who will have them.

LESSON XLV.

The Occasional Prayers and thanksgivings.

If you will now turn, in your prayer books, to the division following the Litany, and read the heading, you will see that there are "prayers and thanksgivings" for several different occasions, which the minister is directed to use (when needed) before the two final prayers of the Litany, or of morning or evening prayer; *i.e.*, before the prayer of St. Chrysostom, which we read in our last lesson, and the concluding prayer, or benediction as it is often called, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," &c.

Let us see what these prayers and thanksgivings are, though I do not propose to go through them all with you, for only one is generally in use.

Look then at the titles. The Prayers come first, the Thanksgivings afterwards. There are prayers for rain, for fair weather—two to be used in time of famine—one in time of war, praying for peace—one in time of plague or great sickness, asking for deliverance—two to be used at a time called the ember weeks, the

usual time for ordaining clergymen, asking God to guide those who admit them, that they may make choice of good, wise, and fit persons, and to bless those who are so ordained—one general prayer for an answer to prayer and for pardon—one for the parliament, which is read only during their session or sittings, and then another general prayer to be used only when the Litany is not read (which it never is in Evening Service) being a kind of summing up of the Litany.

Then come the thanksgivings. First a general one, which is constantly used—then one for rain—one for fair weather—one for plenty and good harvests—one for peace and deliverance from foreign enemies—another for peace from troubles or riots in our own country—and two for being delivered from plagues and pestilences.

Now there are one or two lessons I wish you to learn from all this.

I. How many our wants are! How many things we need to make us happy! How many things there are, either one of which goes far to spoil our happiness.

Suppose that, like the Israelites in the days of Elijah, we were three-and-a-hal years without rain, the ponds and the little streams all dried up, the wells dry, the earth parched, the corn withered, fruit and vegetables almost all lost! What dreadful sufferings would there be! Or fancy a flood, not indeed so bad as in the days of Noah, but inundations, such as have sometimes happened in this and other countries, when the rivers were swollen by excessive rain and covered the country for miles and miles, throwing down houses, destroying all the crops, and costing many lives.

Then again famine, as in Ireland not many years since, when thousands really died of starvation: or worse still, as in Samaria and Jerusalem, when women eat their own children!

Then the evils of war! If you want to know what they are, ask any soldier who was in the Crimea, or who was in India during the native mutinies there. Or civil war and tumults, like the French Revolution of old, or the terrible strife still waging between the people of the United States of America, where men speaking the same tongue have fought against each other with savage cruelty.

We may well pray to God most earnestly when any such evils come upon or even threaten us—and we surely do well also to pray that our Parliament and rulers may guide our affairs aright, for it is by God's help when they do so, as Christ Himself teaches us, under his title of wisdom, Prov. viii. 14—16.

And we may well pray that we may have wise and godly ministers, that *all* may be what so many are, and that those whom we have already, may be strengthened with fresh grace daily. Our ministers need our prayers. See what St Paul said, 1 Thess. v. 25; Heb. xiii. 18.

2nd. We are reminded that we should bring *all* our wants to God, whether we be suffering from war, disease, famine, or any other calamity, and also seek of Him those blessings for others which they need to minister profitably for us. Read Phil. iv. 6, and note the "everything," and see also Solomon's prayer, 1 Kings xiii. 33—39.

3rdly. That for all our mercies we should thank God. If rain falls when everything is parched and dry, or if fair weather returns after storms and floods; if a disease like the cholera is abated and at last ceases; if the horrors of war are brought to an end by welcome peace, all these are God's gifts, and to Him should our praise be given. See Psalm lxviii. 9; cxlvii. 14; Prov. xvi. 7; Is. lx. 18; Mal. iii. 10, 11.

Let us read the general thanksgiving, which speaks of God's goodness to us and to all men (teaching us that the happiness of others should be pleasing to us, as in

Rom. xii. 15). We thank God for temporal mercies, but still more for spiritual ones, and beseech Him to make us *feel* His mercies more as we ought ("a *due* sense") and to enable us to show our gratitude by our lives. So Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

This portion of the morning service then concludes with the blessing from 2 Cor. xiii. 14. The grace or free favour of Christ, means His undeserved kindness. The fellowship or communion of the Holy Ghost, means His graciously dwelling with us as friends do with friends. And remember that it is God Himself who directs us to use such words as these. See also John xvii. 23, and 1 John i. 3.

What greater blessings can we have than that God should love us—that Christ should pour His mercy on us, and the Spirit dwell with us? No earthly wealth is to be compared for a moment with such blessings. But are they yours?

LESSON XLVI.

The Communion Service.

For a considerable time after the Reformation in the sixteenth century, the Morning Prayer, the Litany, and the Communion were separate services. Custom has led to their being joined into one; and now, after the Morning Prayer, follows a part of what is called the Communion Service. If you turn to it in your prayer books, you will see it headed—"*The order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper*;" and the Rubrics under the heading all relate to that solemn ordinance. But as it is usual now to read a part of the service every Sunday, whether the sacrament be administered or not, let us keep to that part, and we shall see how many precious truths are thus brought before us, and we shall be thankful for this portion of our Sunday services.

First, then, comes the Lord's Prayer, said by the minister alone. This marks the division in our services, as well as being a summary of our other prayers, and is the appropriate beginning of this service especially, for in seeking the closest communion with God which we can attain on earth, it is meet that we should address Him in the words taught us by His beloved Son.

Do not let the frequent use of this Divine prayer lead you to go through it or listen to it with carelessness. God's mercies are new every morning, and He is not weary of blessing us; let us not be weary of seeking or thanking Him.

Then there is a collect in which we pray for purity and sanctification, alike needed by those who desire to keep God's commandments, or to feed on the bread of life.

It speaks of God's knowledge of our inmost thoughts, and prays that those thoughts may be cleansed by His Holy Spirit, so that we may love Him and serve Him.

All hearts are open to God. Yes, think of that now; and think of it when next you kneel before Him. His piercing eye reads your secret thoughts. So our Lord read the guilty heart of Judas; and often startled the Scribes and Pharisees by answering objections and murmurs which they had not uttered to Him. See Ezek. xxxiii. 31; Matt. xv. 7, 8; ix. 4, 5; and Ps. cxxx ix. 1, 2.

No secrets are hidden from Him. You may hide them from me, from your teachers, your parents—but not from God. It may be secret anger, or secret covetousness, or secret envy—God knows it. And if you could only realize this when evil thoughts assail you, it might save you from many a yielding. Oh, how

many foolish, sinful thoughts, pass through our minds! Well may we go on to pray that the Holy Spirit would inspire us (*i.e.* put *good* thoughts into our hearts) and cleanse us; and that, especially, when we are in His house on His day. For then, many thoughts that would be proper at other times and in other places are wrong. Christ drove out the sellers of animals for sacrifice out of the temple; their trade was lawful, but not in that place. And for what purpose do we now ask for this? That we may love God perfectly, and magnify or praise Him worthily. See, then, how we are reminded that God requires a perfect love, and a perfect service; and do not you be content to give Him less.

Now read the next Rubric. The priest, or minister, turns to the people, that he may be well heard; and rehearses, or repeats, the ten commandments whilst the people, after each, ask mercy for their having broken it in times past and seek grace to keep it in the time to come.

Let us read their prayer together. We ought to *feel* that confession, for one way or another we are continually grieving God. (James iii. 2). And we have need to seek grace; to ask that our hearts, which naturally are not inclined to keep God's law, may be inclined. And the concluding prayer is almost in the very words of God's promise in Jerem. xxxi. 32, 33. Remember, then, that you are only asking for what God has already declared His willingness to give.

Why read the commandments in church? We may suppose two good reasons. I. To show us our duty (you will remember what is said in the catechism about this "my duty towards God, and my duty towards my neighbour,") and, II. To show us our guilt before God, and to remind us of our transgressions against the Divine law; that being thus made conscious how far we have sinned, we may with deeper contrition humble ourselves and seek mercy. See what St. Paul says, Rom. iii. 20.

These commandments were given, it is true, to the Jews, on Mount Sinai; but the spirit and meaning of them had always from the first been set before man by God. And neither are they now set aside. Our Lord has spoken of them as all summed up in two great commandments, binding on all men for ever. Matt. xix. 17—19; xxii. 36—40. And St. James speaks of them as all of equal force, James ii. 10, 11. Read also Matt. v. 17, 24, 33—37, where our Lord shows also how they apply even to the thoughts.

Remember, then, when next you hear these commandments read in church, *whose* commands they are, and to whom you must one day give account the of way in which you have kept them. And as your consciences accuse you of many transgressions, plead earnestly that God would have mercy on you for Christ's sake.

LESSON XLVII.

The Communion Service, *continued.*

After the Commandments come a prayer for the Queen, following the practice of the apostles and the primitive Church, 1 Tim. ii. 1—2. Let us read the two of which the minister has to choose one.

The first speaks of the Queen's duty to God, and then our duty to her. The second, of her duty to God and to us.

Perhaps some of you may think that the Queen has nothing to do but to enjoy herself. These Collects show something quite different, and if you were to spend

a week with our beloved Queen, you would see that she really works hard, trying to do her duty to God and her people.

We ask God to rule, to dispose, and to govern her heart; meaning that He would guide and lead her. He can do so; the mightiest monarchs are under His control as much as the youngest child, Prov. xxi. 1. So He ruled the heart of the first Pharoah to be kind to Joseph and his family. So He turned the heart of even the proud Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 34—37; so that he learned to acknowledge God as King of kings. He warns and threatens wicked kings, such as Saul, Pharoah, Belshazzar, Herod.

Let us thank God we have so good a Queen. She is God's "chosen servant," or "minister," which also means servant; for see Rom xiii. 1. Therefore her duty to God, which we here pray she may perform, is to seek His honour and glory (not her own, as Nebuchadnezzar at first did, Dan. iv. 30, and Herod did, Acts xii. 21—23), in all her thoughts, words, and works. If she does, see God's promise to her, 1 Sam. ii. 30.

What is her duty to us, her subjects, *i.e.*, those subjected to her, under her rule? To study, *i.e.*, to take pains and make it her patient endeavour to preserve us in "wealth, peace, and godliness." Here are three great blessings, the best last; and we see that the way in which a nation is governed has much to do with these blessings.

Bad laws, such as Darius made in thoughtlessness (Dan. vi. 6—9), cruel persecution, such as Herod's (Acts xii.), oppression and tyranny (such as Manasseh's, 2 King's xxi. 16), idolatry (such as Jeroboam's, 1 Kings xii. 26—33), a love of war (such as even in good Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 20, 21), a love of display (such as even in good Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 23—25), and excessive taxation (such as Solomon laid on his people, 1 Kings v. 13—17; ix. 15; xii. 4, 5), all these are hurtful to a country, and a good pious ruler is a great blessing to his people in avoiding them.

Then what is our duty to the Queen? We are "duly," *i.e.*, properly to consider "whose authority she hath." That means who put her in authority, and gave her the right to rule over us. Some men forget this, and become rebels, sinning therefore against God as well as man. So St. Paul tell us: Rom. xiii. 2. Absalom was a rebel: so was Jeroboam. But we are to serve, honour, and humbly obey the Queen, as we also say in our Catechism. See again Rom. xiii. 7; and 1 Pet. ii. 13—15, 17.

The Queen joins with the Lords and the House of Commons in making laws. She appoints magistrates and judges: and from one to another authority descends even to the humblest policeman; and *him* you must obey, living a quiet, orderly life.

But notice one thing more. We are to obey the Queen in the Lord and for His sake and His glory ("in Thee and for Thee"). If it ever came to pass that our King or Queen commanded us to do anything contrary to the law of God, we must obey God and disobey man; so said Peter and John to the rulers of the Jews; Acts iv. 19, 20,; v. 28, 29. And so acted the three Jews, when ordered by Nebuchadnezzar to worship the golden image; and Daniel, when a royal law forbade any one to pray except to Darius. And so have a "noble army of martyrs" done, in England and other countries.

When next you hear this prayer again, pray for our good Queen from your very heart. She needs it, and she deserves it.

LESSON XLVIII.

THE COMMUNION SERVICE, *continued*.

After the Collect for the Queen, the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel are appointed to be used; in these the congregation is reminded of whatever is interesting or important in the several seasons of the Christian year, which may be divided into two parts,—the one for the consideration of the life, sufferings, and triumph of our Lord; the other for the application of His precepts and examples to our own character.

It was the custom of the Church, from the earliest times, to read select portions of the New Testament first for the Epistle and then for the Gospel, before the celebration of the Lord's Supper, even as the Jews, at the eating of the Passover, read the history of its institution. The Epistle is read first, as the word of the servant, to prepare the way for the words of the Lord Himself, in the Gospel to which the last place and the greatest honour is reserved, even as we find in Luke x. 1, the disciples "went before His face to every city and place, whither He Himself would come." In early times the people always *stood* when the lessons from Scripture were read, to show their reverence for God's Holy Word; but as this was found too fatiguing for many, the practice has been confined to the reading of the Gospel in this part of the service, thus showing that we have a greater respect to the words of the Son of God Himself than to any other, even though inspired by Him, and speaking by His authority.

As a confession of belief in all the articles of the Christian faith is required of those who come to Baptism, so also a similar confession is fitly called for from those who renew the covenant by coming to participate in the Lord's Supper. The Nicene Creed here introduced, is so called because drawn up by the first General Council of Nice, a city of Bithynia, in the year 325, as far as relates to the first two persons of the blessed Trinity; that portion of it relating to the personality of the Holy Ghost was added in 381, to refute the heresy on the subject which then prevailed.

This Creed is a fuller one than the Apostles' Creed, but just the same in doctrine. Respecting God the Father there is nothing new stated, or different from the Apostles' Creed. Of our Lord Jesus Christ we say, that He was begotten of (or by) God before all worlds (John i. 1, 2, 14—18). God begotten by God (for the word "begotten" is to be understood between). "Light begotten by light." "Very," *i.e.*, THE TRUE God begotten by the true God. All this is to express more strongly that we believe Him to be perfect God.

Of the Holy Ghost we say that He gives life. He gave life to the first Adam, for God breathed into his nostrils the breath or spirit of life, Gen. ii. 7; Job. xxxiii. 4. It is He who gives spiritual or new life, John iii. 5; Rom. viii. 2. And see, too, that He is spoken of as equal to the Father and the Son, and to be worshipped. He it was who inspired the prophets and other holy men who wrote the Bible, 2 Pet. i. 21. How we ought to love him, and to praise Him! And how careful we ought to be not to grieve Him by wilful sin.

"One Catholic and Apostolic Church." Catholic merely means universal, all God's people throughout the world, young and old, rich and poor, educated or uneducated; all in every country from north to south, and east to west; all in every age, from the time of faithful Abel to the last who has given his heart to God, make up one Church. They cannot all know each other, but God knows each one, and will not suffer one to be lost. ALL shall be gathered at last into His heavenly mansions.

"Apostolic." Why call the Church by this title? Because the apostles were like the foundation to it, Ephes. ii. 20. It holds the same doctrines that they did —believes the same truths—has the same hopes.

"One Baptism for the remission of sins." The remission means the forgiveness, such as is spoken of in the Apostles' Creed. Baptism is the "outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." And only *one* baptism can be such, the baptism into the Church of Christ. For there is none other name under heaven whereby we can be saved.

"I look for," or as we now say, "I expect, the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." These are solemn words to end the service with! The world to come! *Do* we look for it? Do we hope for it? And when the resurrection comes, which of the two results described in Dan. xii. 2 will be ours?

LESSON XLIX.

SERMONS.

OUR Lesson to-day is about *sermons*. Perhaps you wonder what there can be to be said about sermons. Let us see.

You know that after the Nicene Creed, in the Communion Service, it is usual to sing a hymn. Then the minister goes into the pulpit, repeats a Collect and the Lord's Prayer, reads a verse or verses as his text, and preaches a sermon. A sermon means a discourse, or, in plainer words, a talk about any matter. The minister then talks to the congregation.

Remember what I said before about the prayers being both for minister and people together. They confess together, and pray together, and praise God together; for he, like them, is a sinner before God, needing pardon through Christ.

One thing in the service he does alone—he pronounces the Absolution. (Refer to Lesson viii.) That he does as the appointed messenger from God to them. But now, also, as the appointed teacher, he stands up where he may best be heard and seen, to preach or declare solemnly Scripture truth. He promised, when he was ordained (*i.e.*, set apart before God and the Church to be a clergyman, distinguished from all business and professions), that he would "out of the said Scriptures instruct the people committed to his charge." And he alone has the right to do it. No layman (*i.e.*, no one who is not a clergyman) may preach in church in the Church of England. The bishop, who ordains clergymen, gives them the authority.

So it is the clergyman's right, and his duty. It is also his privilege. A privilege means a private enjoyment, something one person possesses which *all* do not. And it is a blessing and a source of happiness to be allowed to preach the Gospel.

Did the Jewish priests preach? If not under that name, they did something just like it. Read Neh. viii. 1—8, and then Deut. xxxiii. 8—10; 2 Chron. xvii. 7, 9; xxx. 22; and especially Mal. ii. 7. Did the Apostles preach? You can easily answer that question out of the Acts of the Apostles. Look at Peter's sermon, Acts ii.; and his second, in Acts iii.; and that he preached to Cornelius and his household, Acts x. 34—48. Then Paul often preached, see Acts xiii.: and his famous sermon, as he stood on Mars' Hill, in Athens, Acts xvii. Then his long sermon, when Eutychus went to sleep, and fell down from the windows,

Acts xx. Would not you have been tired? But most of that congregation would have listened as long as Paul could preach, because they loved him, and loved his message.

Then there is a story of a short sermon; for it is said that when John the Apostle became so old and weak that he could not preach from the pulpit, he was carried into the street, and used to say to the Christians he met, "Little children, love one another," words which many people mistake for a text of Scripture, so well are they known.

All the Apostles preached. And why? You will find the answer in Mark xvi. 15; Luke xxiv. 47. If they had not, how could the Gospel have spread when books were so scarce? And who was the great example in preaching? Our Lord Himself. There is a sermon of His in Matt. v., vi., vii.; and He was constantly preaching: see Mark i. 14; Luke iv. 44. Clergymen now, then, follow His example, and discharge their duty when they take a verse or so of the Bible, and explain it to us.

Sermons are often too difficult for children to understand, being meant for grown-up people. But if even young children would listen carefully, and *try*, they would understand much more than they do now.

Remember, then, as you hear another sermon, that God ordained that way of teaching. Then be reverent and attentive. Say as David did, "Teach me, O Lord;" for it is God's good pleasure that we should learn of His ministers, who thus fulfil the Lord's commission, "to preach the Gospel to every creature;" and by the word uttered by them, God is pleased to add daily to the Church such as shall be saved.

And if you hear thus, you will be, indeed, a sharer in the blessing with which the clergyman finishes the whole morning service, after first giving glory to God for all His mercy so preached to fallen man.

LESSON L.

The Evening Service.

Hitherto our Lessons have referred to the Service with which the morning of the Sabbath day is occupied: but the Church has appointed, also, that we should close, as well as begin, the sacred day by the public worship of God. David's prayer, you remember, was, "Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands be as the evening sacrifice." (Ps. cxli. 2.) He was thinking of the appointed services of the temple, and desiring that his silent, secret prayers, as the day began and closed, might be accepted, also, before God's throne. And now that spiritual worship supplies the place of typical sacrifices, we have a morning and evening service prepared for us by the Church, that we may thus learn to consecrate the whole of our time to God, and to begin and end each day in His service.

Nor can we pass through God's holy day, in its sacred employments, or review the manner in which we have spent it, and engaged in its duties, without feeling it needful to renew our repentance, to seek fresh grace, and, ere we retire to rest for the night, to obtain the assurance that we are at peace with God. Hence it is that the first part of the service is similar to that of the morning; for Scriptural exhortations to repentance and promises of pardon are given that we may be led to confess the sins of the past day, and again receive the announcement of for-

giveness, if we have, indeed, repented, before we resign ourselves to sleep and helplessness. Happy those who have thus the confidence, as they lie down in their beds, "that the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him." (Ps. xxxiv. 7.)

The continuous course of reading of the Psalms for models and exercises of devotion, and of chapters from the Old and New Testaments, show us how anxious the Church of England is to instruct her members in the Word of God, not in some of its parts merely, but as a whole; for "*All* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable." (2 Tim. iii. 16.)

As it is not intended that our Evening Service should be an exact repetition of that for the morning, although it commences with the same confession of sins, it varies not only in its Psalms and Lessons, but also in the hymns which are appointed to be said or sung, and in the prayers that follow being substituted for the Litany used in the Morning Service.

After the reading of the Lesson from the Old Testament, the Song of the Virgin (Luke i. 46—55), called the *Magnificat*, from its first word in Latin, or else the ninety-eighth Psalm, is appointed to be used. The former, inspired by the Holy Ghost, and breathing the language of zeal and love, is a song of praise, in which the mother of our Lord expressed her joy that the promises of the Old Testament were about to be fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ. *Her* thankfulness in being regarded as worthy to be made the mother of the Messiah may fully express the humble gratitude *we* must feel in being admitted into communion with Him, and being received into God's family through Him. Her song of praise for the holiness and mercy of God, His mighty aid, His tender compassion and goodness, His truth and faithfulness, may well find a response in the heart of every believer, who can thus express his sense of God's general loving-kindness to all (verses 50—53), and His special goodness to His people (54, 55), which will be his natural feelings after listening to the Word of God. If the ninety-eighth Psalm (*Cantate Domino*) be substituted for this song of praise, it will be found especially suited to the minds of those who have been listening to one of the many records found in the Old Testament of some special interference on the part of God for the safety of His people; for it is the triumphal song of David and his people, rejoicing in deliverance, and seems to point especially to the victory of Divine power and justice in the person of the Saviour—a work so wonderful that all nature, the sea, the floods, the everlasting hills, "the round world, and they that dwell therein," are invited to share in its glad words of praise.

Following the Second Lesson at Evening Prayer (selected from the Epistles of the Apostles of our Lord), two other hymns are appointed, one or other of which may be used at the option of the minister. As in the former case, one is a Psalm, and one a passage from the New Testament. The song of Simeon (called from its first Latin words, *Nunc Dimittis*), spoken by the venerable servant of the Lord on the occasion of his meeting Christ in the temple (Luke ii. 25—32), expressed his thankfulness at being permitted to see the Lord's anointed with his bodily eyes, and thus being able to "depart in peace." The revelation then given to him is now given to all; for not only is Christ "the glory of Thy people Israel," to whom His salvation was first offered (see John iv. 22; Luke xxiv. 47), but "a light to lighten the Gentiles," as predicted by the prophets: see Is. xlix 6, 7; Ps. xcviii. 3; Mal. iv. 2. *Now* we may all, by the eye of faith, see the Saviour; He has come to be the light of the world, to give peace to all, and, in their dying hour (be they young or old), to enable them also to depart in peace, by becoming the Resurrection and the Life (2 Pet. iii. 11—13).

The Psalm of David (lxvii.) which may be substituted for this song is a prayer for the coming of the Messiah, used at the Feast of Tabernacles, when the people were directed by it to the times of refreshing, when God should be everywhere worshipped, and the long-desired reign of peace and blessedness established. That time of the universal propagation of the knowledge of the Lord and of His salvation is yet to come—the second Advent of the Saviour, in all His power and glory, for which His true servants are ever longing and waiting: see Rev. xxii. 20. Are we so looking for, and ready for, His coming? Matt. xxiv. 46.

LESSON LI.

The Evening Service, *continued*.

As in the morning, so in the evening, we follow the hearing of the Word of God, by a confession of our faith in Christ, in the words of the Apostles' Creed, which is based upon that Word. By this repetition of the essential points of our belief as Christians, at every public assembly for prayer, all who are present are continually reminded of their profession, and the ignorant are instructed in the elements of the true faith.

The Lord's Prayer, and the versicles preceding and following it, are then introduced as in the morning service, and the collect for the day. Then we find two special collects which we will now read, the *second* and *third* collects for evening prayer.

The *second* collect for evening prayer, like that of the morning, is a prayer for *peace;* then it was for ability to walk safely and undisturbed through the perplexing paths of the world—now we ask for that inward tranquillity, the peace which the world cannot give, by which alone we ought to feel happy and secure in lying down to take our rest, Ps. iv. 8. We ascribe to God the only "holy desires" we have, for they do not naturally proceed from our own hearts (Rom. vii. 18). All "good counsels," guidance and direction in the right way, come from Him, as well as all the "just works" which are done by His help and grace; and thus, feeling our dependence on God as the giver of all good things, we ask Him to fulfil the promise of His beloved Son (John xiv. 27), and to give us peace, and the desire ("that our hearts may be set") to obey His commandments, and so to defend us from the spiritual enemies who surround us by day and night, that we may cease to be tormented by the "fear" of them, but be enabled to pass our time in "rest and quietness," the tranquillity which is only enjoyed by those who love the law of their God and trust in Him, see Ps. cxix. 148, 165.

Brief as is the *third* collect, it is full of meaning—for in it we pray "for aid against all perils,"—the dangers to which, in the night season, we are peculiarly exposed, commending ourselves, when amidst the terrors of darkness, into the hands of that God "who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth, and to whom the darkness and the light are both alike." Even as the pillar of the cloud gave light through the night to the Israelites of old on their departure from Egypt (Ex. xiii. 21), so God, the Fountain of light, takes away the natural darkness of our minds and hearts (Eph. v. 8; 1 Pet. ii. 9), and guards us from the unseen dangers of the night. How many and various these are! and how helpless we are to protect ourselves in the hours of sleep! Fire or murder, violence, storm, or tempest, sickness, pain, or death, might come upon each of us in the night season, as they *do* come upon many, and we could do nothing to save ourselves; well, then,

may we ask for the "great mercy" of God to "lighten our darkness" by His presence, and to defend us from all the dangers to which, unconsciously, we may be exposed. We should notice the plea upon which we urge God thus to take us under His special protection—"for the *love* of thy only Son our Saviour,"—the love of God to Christ, the love of Christ to us. Can we doubt that this plea will be heard and answered?

In the order of morning service, prayers are inserted for the Queen, the Royal Family, for the clergy and people, and for all conditions of men, but they are omitted to give place to the Litany, in which petitions, answering to these, are found. In the evening service, these prayers are always used, and we will look at them in their order.

First, there is the prayer for the Queen. We do not forget that it is by God that kings rule (Prov. viii. 15), for we address Him, as "the King of kings" (Rev. xvii. 14), whose power and authority is greater than that of any earthly sovereign, to whom they are necessarily subject. We know, too, that He beholds "all the dwellers upon earth," and while He is ever present to listen to the prayer of, and to protect the meanest subject, He is also near to guard the occupant of the throne. So we feel that there is reason in the injunction of the Apostle (1 Tim. ii. 2) that we should pray for "kings," and loving our own Queen, as all must do who know how good and gracious a ruler she is, we ask, first, for all spiritual blessings to be given to her (Matt. vi. 33)—"heavenly gifts," the teaching and help of the Holy Spirit, "that she may always incline to Thy will, and walk in Thy way," Ps. cxix. 112; and then we pray that earthly and temporal blessings may abundantly be hers, for these will only be of real good when they are used as God would have them employed for His honour and glory. Health, wealth, and long life, are personal blessings; victory over the enemies of the nation, is a boon also to the people; and the closing petition asks for the Queen that she may only end a life of prosperity in this world by beginning one of eternal joy and happiness in the next (Ps. xci. 16). And it is, we may be sure, a great comfort to our Queen at all times to feel that so many thousands of her people are offering this prayer for her from week to week; nor can we doubt that it was in answer to prayer that God has been pleased to sustain our beloved Sovereign in the deep sorrow which it pleased Him to bring upon her a year ago in the loss of her beloved Consort.

The prayer for the Royal Family follows, and is based upon the same principle; they, too, need the Holy Spirit to guide them; their greatest riches and treasures will be the "heavenly grace" of God their Father, by whom alone they can enjoy happiness in this life, or becomes heirs of the heavenly kingdom. The high position they have to fill, the temptations to which they are exposed by worldly prosperity, and the sad thought that now the younger members of our own Royal Family are deprived of the advantage of a wise and good father's counsel and control, make it the more necessary that we should pray for them, if they are to be good rulers and examples of righteousness to the people in the future, that they may grow up and abide in the fear of the Lord, by the continual help of His grace.

When praying for these gifts for others,—even for the highest in the land,—let us not forget that we, too, must be partakers of the same grace, if we are to be saved.

LESSON LII.

THE EVENING SERVICE, *concluded.*

AFTER the prayers for the Queen and the Royal Family, is one for the clergy and people. In it we speak to God, and say that "Thou alone workest great marvels," thereby implying that we are about to ask for some special and wonderful exercise of His power. What is the prayer which follows? "Send down upon our bishops and curates, and all congregations committed to their charge, the healthful spirit of Thy grace." Perhaps we may think this is not such a marvellous gift, yet it really is so. The first outpouring of the Holy Ghost astonished all who beheld it (Acts. ii. 1—7), and now without outward signs, the effects are no less wonderful, changing the heart and will, the desires and passions, and turning them from darkness to light, from Satan to God (Jer. xvii. 9; Matt. xv. 19).

"Bishops and Curates," are the two great classes of the clergy, the one the chief shepherds of the flock of Christ, the other those who are entrusted with the cure or care of souls, and they represent all the ministers of God's Church, to whom His people are committed for instruction. They cannot turn the hearts of men by their own power, although God may bless the words they speak in His name. The Spirit of God alone can give "health" to the sin-diseased soul, by His own purifying, quickening grace. This once given is not sufficient to keep us from falling, so we go on to pray for "the continual dew of Thy blessing"—constant fresh supplies of grace, even as the dew which gives unperceived moisture, day by day, to the vegetable world. So, too, unnoticed by others, unperceived even by ourselves, does God give strength to those who earnestly strive to "please" Him, for the sake of our gracious Advocate and Mediator (1 John ii. 1; Heb. vii. 25.)

The prayer appointed to be used only during the sitting of the Houses of Parliament follows that for our spiritual guides, and is then used to implore the Divine guidance to those appointed to make the laws for the nation. Little good can be expected from mere worldly wisdom or prudence (Ps. cxxvii. 1, 2.) therefore we pray God so "to direct and prosper all their consultations," that good may result from them, first to the advancement of His glory, then for the good of the Church and that of the nation. If a right foundation be laid, good fruits will spring forth—the "peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety," for which we pray, for ourselves and our nation, in all time to come.

We conclude our evening supplication for others by "the prayer for all conditions of men," so that none may be forgotten by us (1 Tim. ii. 1). We address God as "the Creator and Preserver" of mankind, as the reason why we ask His aid for all, for as creatures we naturally look to our Maker for help, and the remembrance of His care over us in the past, encourages to trust to it in the future (Isaiah xliii. 1, 2). We first ask that God's "ways" may be known, so that understanding His purposes of mercy to us, we may not be impatient at want of success, or fretful in the season of trial or sorrow. "Saving health" is a real practical knowledge of salvation; alas how many *know* the Gospel, but have not thus made it the medicine of their souls! We pray for "all nations" to be granted this salvation, and then especially ask for blessings upon the Church, universally, that "all" who bear the name of Christians may be taught by God's Holy Spirit to receive and love the truth, and act it in a pure and holy outward life and conversation. Especially do we entreat help for the suffering—those "afflicted in mind," by anxieties, sorrows, or impending evils: in "body"

by pain or sickness: in "estate" by loss of property or by actual want. We do not ask presumptuously that they may be at once freed from their troubles, but that they may be granted "patience" so long as God sees fit to afflict them, and relief in His own good time, thus at length attaining "a happy issue out of all their afflictions."

Praise is as evident a duty as prayer. "Were there not ten cleansed: but where are the nine?" (Luke xvii. 17.) is our Lord's reproof of unthankfulness, and we cannot end our Evening Service without repeating "the General Thanksgiving" to the Father of all mercies, for that life which we all love and are so anxious to preserve; (Acts xvii. 25.) for guarding us against the dangers to which we are constantly exposed, and for all the means of happiness He gives us. But, "above all" these, ought we to thank Him for the gift of the Saviour—for the means of grace we enjoy through Him—the Gospel, the Lord's Day and its worship; the opportunity of communion with Him by prayer and in His Word, and for that "hope of glory" which fills our hearts with joy and gladness. Nor can we be truly grateful for these without adding a petition that we may use them aright, or asking that we may be able to show forth our praise by dedicating ourselves to His service "all our days."

As we bring our prayers and praises to a close, the conviction that they are full of distractions and imperfections, and that weak, erring, and finite as we are, we need even to ask pardon for these, presses upon us. The "Prayer of St. Chrysostom" is exactly suited to our need, for in it we address the Saviour, our great Intercessor, remind Him of His gracious promise to hear the united prayers of His people (Matt. xviii. 20), and beseech Him to grant our requests only so far as may be for our real good, praying simply to know Him and His truth here, and to attain in the end to everlasting life.

This is the sum of all we need; and the benedictory prayer of St. Paul (2 Cor. xiii. 14) which concludes the Service, may well solemnise our hearts, as we end the public worship of God on His holy day, and keep us in His faith and fear and love all the week: for if indeed we possess the grace of Christ our Saviour, and the love of our heavenly Father, through Him, and abide in the communion of the Holy Ghost, we have the life of God in our souls now, and the earnest of that glory to which we hope we shall attain hereafter.

ILLUSTRATION.

Spring-Time.

As the herbs and flowers which sleep all winter in their roots underground, when the time of spring approacheth presently start forth of their beds where they had been so long unperceived,—thus will it be with God's promises. He *delays* who passeth the time appointed—but he only *stays* who waits for the appointed time, and then comes. Every promise is dated, but with a mysterious character; and for want of skill in God's chronology, we are prone to think that God forgets us, when indeed we forget ourselves in being so bold as to set God a time of our own, and in being angry that He comes not just then to us.

Gurnal.

SKETCH OF AN ADDRESS ON PSALM XXXVII. 4.

[THE object in view in this address is to bring before the mind (as strongly as possible) the question, "Are the desires of my heart in accordance with God's will?" and then to enforce the promise that *such* desires shall be fulfilled.]

I.—"The desires of thine heart." How varied these are! Suppose, for a moment, I could grant all your desires, on condition that each in turn described them, what a strange and mixed list it would be. Dress, pleasure, riches, a grand home, even feasting! Then some better things—health (for ourselves and for those we love), work and daily bread, the safe return of those we love, or mental blessings, as wisdom. Then, better still, the salvation of our own souls, and of those dear to us—usefulness—heaven.

II.—These are some of the desires of the heart. Do you EXPECT that all these will be fulfilled? You wish, and you hope, but is there any certainty? How far can you yourselves, and by your own power, make sure of obtaining what you wish for? Not at all!

There was a man who lost all his property by conduct like that of the Prodigal Son. Looking one day, from a hill, over the fine estate he had lost, he made a resolution that he would win it all back. He began (gentleman as he had been) by wheeling some manure into a garden for a man, who gave him sixpence or a shilling. He dined on some bread, given him, and saved his money. By keeping to this kind of self-denial, he gained money enough to buy back every acre. But can you say that all depended on his own exertions? No; the God whom he forgot kept him ALIVE. The loss of health, or an accident, might at any moment have cut short his plans. If we are to have the desires of our heart fulfilled, it can only be by God's permission.

III.—Then we must look above; and what says our text? What comfort does it give us? What assurance? A full one! God will give thee the desires of thine heart.

What, then, can we reckon with certainty on obtaining what we so much desire? There seems no doubt of this. God certainly knows what we desire, and as certainly CAN give whatever He chooses. In this text He seems to say that He WILL.

Stop a moment! Look at the first half of the text—the CONDITION. "Delight thyself in the Lord," and THEN He will fulfil your desires. Well—and will a child of God get what he wishes for? That seems certainly promised here. BUT WHAT WILL A CHILD OF GOD WISH FOR AND DESIRE? Certainly not such things as the prodigal son did, eating and drinking greedily, or riotous

living. No, nor to heap up riches—nor to dress like a peacock—nor to live in grandeur. He has learnt to delight himself in the Lord—to love His ways and commandments, and he cannot now find real delight in anything that leads him away from God.

Even in innocent things, will the Christian allow himself to long for anything God sees it best to take away or keep from him? His heart may weakly desire it, but he tries to drive away such desires; and it comes to this—the more truly he delights in God, the more will he wish for only what God chooses, and that because he feels sure that GOD KNOWS BEST. Sometimes he desires what would not be good for him—makes mistakes, or even goes wrong. Will God give him those desires? No, the promise is not for such mistaken desires, and in his better moments he would rather God did *not* give him what would be at last hurtful: so, as he comes more and more to delight in God, his desires are more and more for what God chooses, and more and more like God's will. ALL SUCH DESIRES GOD WILL FULFIL!

IV. WHEN—WHERE—HOW? If anything we earnestly long for is promised us, then however impatient we may be to have it, would we not WAIT for it, rather than lose it?

When we desire earthly blessings, we may be mistaken. We may be desiring what God sees it best not to give us. When we desire heavenly blessings, we cannot be wrong—THEY WILL COME, only in God's way and God's time.

Do you desire such things as God wills? Only wait, and they will come.

If you reach the blessed home above you will say, "all that I ever could wish for, or imagine, of perfect happiness is here, and MORE too." The perfect joy of that Kingdom is more than enough to satisfy the desires of every heart. **J. G. F.**

ILLUSTRATION.

THE DEW.

IT is peculiarly true of the dew that it moistens everything where it falls; it leaves not one leaf unvisited, there is not a tiny blade of grass on which its diamond drops do not descend, every leaf and stem of the bush is burdened with the precious load.

Just so it is peculiarly true of the Spirit, that there is not a faculty, there is not an affection, a power or passion of the soul, on which the Spirit does not descend, working through all, refreshing, reviving, renewing, re-creating all. And if we are really in Christ Jesus, abiding in Him by faith, we are bound to expect this supernatural power to work through our understanding, for if we be not led by the Spirit, we are none of his. *M'Cheyne.*

The Lecture.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ADDRESSES.

A Paper read before the SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS' CLASS of the ISLINGTON BRANCH OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY,

BY C. H. LOVELL, ESQ.

THE general state of education throughout the country has greatly advanced since the first introduction of Sunday schools. It was originally considered that spelling, and even writing, were within the range of the instruction proper to be imparted at the Sunday school, and a great many children had very few opportunities of learning the rudiments of knowledge beyond those afforded to them by the benevolent exertions of the Sunday school teacher. This state of things has passed away, and the object for which children are gathered together, and teachers assemble on the day of sacred rest, is now almost entirely confined to the imparting religious instruction. It seems to me that the feeling rapidly increases in the minds of those who are most active and energetic in their Sunday duties, that the only sufficient motive to induce them to abandon the comforts of home, and the opportunities of attending to their own religious improvement, is that they may be made the happy instruments of conveying the glad tidings of salvation to some of those, who are living in a state of darkness and ignorance as to their eternal interests,—that they may, by the gracious aid of the Spirit of God, introduce into some youthful heart those germs of the Divine life which shall grow and strengthen, and, finally, mature into a really Christian character;—that they may assist the youthful objects of their care in avoiding the numerous dangers and temptations which will beset their entrance into life; and that they may anticipate the inexpressible satisfaction of meeting in the eternal world some who will acknowledge that their first feeble step in the road, which has brought them to so glorious a consummation, was dictated and upheld (under God) by the friend whom they will then recognise with unspeakable joy. Such being the case, it will be my duty, in making a few remarks on the subject to which your attention is invited this evening, to bear in mind that whatever may tend to advance religious improvement will most effectually accomplish the object for which Sunday schools are established.

There is a very general resemblance in the method by which Metropolitan Sunday schools are conducted. All of them are placed under the general management of one superintendent: the children are divided into classes which rarely exceed twelve in number, except when a great dearth of teachers compels a larger class to be formed, and these teachers meet monthly (

even more frequently) for the purpose of considering the best methods of carrying on their work, and of uniting in prayer for the Divine blessing on their labours.

In all well regulated schools, the choice of lessons is not left to the individual teacher, but a selection of subjects is carefully made, and the talent and energy of the individual teacher may be abundantly called forth in the explanation and illustration of the selected lesson, and in adapting it to the comprehension of the class according to the various ages and capabilities of the children. You are, no doubt, aware that much has been done by some of our most trustworthy Societies for the assistance of youthful and inexperienced teachers, by suggesting suitable divisions of a series of lessons; by selecting numerous texts which may be used in illustrating them; and by pointing out the practical lessons which may be derived from them. A great deal depends on the superintendent as to the order and regularity with which the prescribed routine is observed. And I know of no duty more worthy of the office, and more fruitful in good results, than a persevering effort to keep the whole body of teachers to the subjects which have been selected for their consideration.

And this brings us at once to the question on which we are to have an interchange of opinion this evening, which I understand to be, whether or not the work of the day should be concluded by an Address from the superintendent.

Now, the first difficulty which presents itself to my mind is, that in London the schools for boys and girls are so entirely distinct, that there are separate superintendents for each school, and that no communication whatever takes place between them. I feel, therefore, that the question we have to consider is not whether there shall be one address to a mixed assembly of boys and girls (which is always the best audience) but whether there shall be separate addresses in each room.

There is a natural and very proper repugnance on the part of ladies to attempt delivering an address even when none but girls are assembled to hear it. We are all aware, indeed, that in the recent movement for gathering women in Mothers' Meetings, some ladies have attempted, and with much success, to speak to their assembled class in the form of direct address; but even this is very far from general, and in most cases a minister or Scripture reader is asked to take this part of the duties of the evening. I feel, therefore, that if the girls are to have an address at all, it must be delivered to them by some qualified teacher of the other sex, and I am free to confess that the practical difficulty of making an arrangement by which such an address could be regularly secured, appears to me very considerable.

But having made this concession, I will now state the reasons which induce me to believe that it might add greatly to the interest and usefulness of Sunday school instruction, if addresses were delivered under the regulations, and in the spirit to which I shall hereafter more particularly refer.

You must all have been struck by some forcible texts in the Gospels, as well as in the Epistles, in which the preaching or proclaiming the Gospel is spoken of as the great means Divinely appointed for its diffusion. Far be it from me to undervalue the inestimable privilege we enjoy in having a Bible in our own hands, which we may study in our chamber, to which we may refer at every moment of perplexity, which may be our comfort in sickness, and our safeguard in health, and by which we may effectually test and overcome every effort by which false teachers seek to beguile unstable souls. Still we are not, therefore, to underrate the importance of public, earnest, affectionate,

preaching. The ministers of the Gospel have now a commission very similar to that under which the first teachers entered on their work. Their office is the same—they are ambassadors for Christ; their duties are the same—to arouse the careless and to win souls to Christ; their hope and recompense are the same—to meet around the Throne with the souls of those whom they have been enabled to convince and awaken. The power of words spoken by man to man is very great, much more forcible than mere writing; there is a wonderful influence imparted to the human voice and its tones which will often linger on the hearer's heart for days and weeks after they were uttered. Now, if the Apostolic commission was "preach everywhere," and if the special charge to one of the most favoured of the disciples was "feed my lambs," ought we not to conclude that the duty of addressing children directly on the great truths of the Gospel is enjoined upon us? It may be said that as children form part of our congregations, they are preached to in common with the assembled multitude; but, as a plain matter of fact, we know that much of what is prepared for adults is really unintelligible to children, and I am afraid the general experience of those who sit with our Sunday scholars is, that the great majority of them pay no attention to, and derive no advantage from, the sermons delivered in their presence.

Many ministers have adopted the practice of addressing sermons to children at stated intervals, and where due consideration has been given to the class of subjects adapted to the youthful mind, the most beneficial results have followed this effort to meet a great necessity. It is, however, out of the question to look to the ministers for Sunday school addresses. Their time is so much occupied with the public services of the sanctuary, that it is quite impossible for them to undertake an additional and stated duty. It is, however, highly desirable that the minister should take every opportunity of thus becoming familiar with the youthful members of his flock, and of discovering the method by which their attention may be arrested, and their feelings and affections enlisted in the good and right cause. Still, as a rule, it must be considered that if Sunday school addresses are to be of weekly recurrence, they must be entrusted to the superintendent of the schools, and to those experienced and zealous teachers, whom he may and ought to request to aid him in this important and difficult service.

Let us, therefore, conclude that an address is to be delivered every Sunday afternoon by the minister, the superintendent, or an experienced teacher, and we will, at once, proceed to make a few remarks on the nature and character of the address upon which, after all, the main question of its utility must depend. The object proposed is, that all the children shall pay a willing and intelligent attention to it, and this can only be secured by the strict and diligent observance of some conditions upon which all efforts to gain the attention of young persons depend.

1. The duration of the address should be strictly limited to ten or fifteen minutes at the utmost. Some persons, indeed, are able to keep alive the interest of a number of children for a longer time, but it must be borne in mind that the attention has already been pretty well occupied throughout the day. There has been the morning school and the morning service. Then there has been, at least, an hour of afternoon instruction, so that, it is not to be considered as if this address were the whole, when in fact, it is but a small part of what the children are required to listen to. Probably some of you have felt an interest in the educational discussions which have been going on

recently, and you may have seen some of the pamphlets and addresses on the subject from men of weight, authority and experience in such matters. The opinion is general that the time now devoted to school duties is much too long, and that, during the particular part of the hours of study, the children are, in fact, receiving no instruction at all, from the actual inability of the mind to pay such continued attention. They never encourage the idea of any teacher occupying more than thirty minutes over one lesson, whatever it may be, and they strongly urge all friends of education to depend rather on what fresh and energetic persons will accomplish, than on the jading wearying routine now adopted. Now there is, undoubtedly, much in this, although, probably, such writers overlook the actual periods of relaxation which occur in all schools, and how important it is to parents that their children should be safely out of danger, both moral and physical, for a certain portion of the day; we must, however, feel that to finish a somewhat hard day of confinement with a long address, is an attempt to gain attention when it is hopeless to secure it. And I have no hesitation in urging superintendents, and all others who address children, not to mistake their own interest in the subject for that of the children—not to suppose that they either do or can fully sympathise in the importance of what is said, and to rely rather on the rational effect which the certain knowledge the children will have of the shortness of the address to secure their listening to it, and thus avoid the great waste of time which sometimes occurs in fruitless attempts to secure and compel an attention the mind refuses to give.

2. Having before adverted to the regulation in all well conducted schools,—that all the classes are giving attention to the same subject, according to an arranged list of Lessons, which no teacher has the power to disregard,—you will expect me now to say that the address should be framed upon the same subject. Repetition is much less tiresome to children than to older persons. We have all had occasion to notice, that when a child has been listening to an interesting tale, it usually asks, at the close, that all may be told over again; and the proposal to repeat an old story seems generally to please, rather than to weary children, who watch for and point out any little discrepancies which may occur in the narrative. It will, of course, be very improbable that the superintendent will adopt the exact course which any one of the teachers may have taken in enforcing his subject, although he will probably repeat some of the ideas which they have dwelt upon. He will also be saved from devoting too much time to explanation, inasmuch as he is justified in assuming that all his hearers are, to a certain extent, aware of the general features of his subject. You may imagine a series of Lessons on the principal incidents in the Old Testament—on the life of Joseph, of Moses, of Samuel, of David, of Daniel; or on the history of our blessed Lord, of the great Apostle, or on other Scripture characters; and an intelligent superintendent will find a great source of interest to himself, as well as to all the school, in carrying the subjects on from week to week, until all feel that they have become familiar with the theme, and have so impressed it on their minds, that it will serve for the practical purposes of the life of faith and duty which we have to lead in this dark and dangerous world. I must confess, that without some such encouragements, some such motive to active personal Christian usefulness, the office of superintendent is the most irksome in the school. There is nothing of a spiritual or elevating character in keeping registers and arranging classes, in hearing and noting the various disputes which must from time to time

arise in the management of a school; and it seems to me that, for the purpose of maintaining the superintendent's own love of the work, and deep personal interest in striving to secure the salvation of souls for whom Christ died, he ought to have this opportunity of enforcing every lesson taught in the school.

3. The address should be carefully and prayerfully prepared. No man should think of addressing children without having anxiously pondered beforehand what ideas he will seek to impress, and how he will explain and illustrate them. And here the propriety of the former limit as to time will be found most valuable. You will ordinarily have observed that people who have nothing to say take a long time in saying it; they introduce all kinds of remarks and allusions, in order to fill up time, and wander through a maze of generalities which leave no real impression on the mind, because there is nothing definite enough to rivet the attention. But when a man is deeply and earnestly interested in any subject, and knows that he has only ten minutes to explain himself, he will leave out all that is redundant, and will carefully retain only those solid and important ideas which his conscience tells him he must not omit. While I urge most strongly the importance of preparation, I would not, however, have addresses read. There is a wonderful power in extempore speaking to fix attention, and particularly with children, and it is sometimes necessary to vary the tone and character of an address, if you find that it does not attract the attention expected. Therefore, let all persons who attempt to address the young labour to attain a natural and fluent expression of ideas, prepared and arranged in their own minds.

4. And now comes an easily given direction, but one which it is inexpressibly difficult to carry into practice. Adapt your address to the comprehension of your audience. We have all heard men of talent and good understanding fail miserably in the attempt to interest children; they have appeared to possess no power at all to pour one grain of their own ideas into the youthful mind. And I think I may say, that those who have been most successful will acknowledge that they have found it a matter of great difficulty, or, at all events, one in which they have been compelled to learn many a hard lesson before they could satisfactorily feel that they knew the secret by which the youthful mind can be entered. Nor is it possible for one person to describe his own experience and practice, and tell others to go and do likewise, for in truth human minds vary greatly in their forms. There is an actual, real, and unconquerable difference in the views which the same subject will excite in two opposite minds. Now it is a great mistake to suppose that each of these persons might not secure fixed attention from children. They are willing to listen to the bright and brilliant speaker who can amuse with his vivacity, and call up pleasing pictures before their minds by his imagination. They are not less willing to take the sad and mournful view of a subject, and like to have their feelings and sympathies awakened even to tears by the tale of woe. They have an ear for the hard, dry, and sententious speaker, and they have an ear, and a heart too, for the voice which tells of deep, inward sympathy and love, and which urges important truth with the earnestness of reality. It is not, therefore, the manner, but the matter which is the real attraction. Children have no abstract ideas. You may labour to explain the word faith by a variety of Scripture texts and carefully prepared sentences, but so long as you give them merely words which describe ideas they will very likely fail to grasp your meaning; but

take the course of the great Apostle, and shew them faith as a living reality, simplify to their humble apprehensions some case or circumstance in which they may themselves actually exercise this great and living principle, and you will soon find interest awakened, not merely in the incidents of a narrative, but in the disposition of mind they are intended to display. I cannot too strongly press the importance of avoiding the use of abstract terms in speaking to children, of avoiding all polemical divinity, in fact, of avoiding everything which may not enter their minds as a fact. Even in dealing with adults, it is well to remember that the Scriptures are full of facts, and that all the great doctrines of the Gospel are founded on facts. Be careful, therefore, to let your own thoughts run in that direction. Never be satisfied with stringing words together, unless they convey definite ideas. Know what you mean to impress on the children; let it be a definite, a real, an intelligible idea, adapted to their comprehension, and calculated to influence their conduct, and then be sure that your labour will not be in vain.

5. And here, let me advert to the character of our Lord's addresses, and to the marked difference between them, and the teaching of the Apostles as to their style. What a variety of parables and most pleasing narratives we have in all the Gospels! We have none such in the Epistles, and even in the recorded speeches of St. Paul, and the other Apostles, we have no instance of any attempt on their part to imitate this style of their Divine Master. It is not possible for us to give a thorough explanation of this great difference, but we may safely say that in dealing with young persons, our Lord's example may safely be followed. Here, however, a great difficulty occurs. Whence are we to borrow our illustrations? Now it is generally considered that our Lord's parables were founded in facts, and there can be no doubt that we should rely much less than is sometimes done, on the imagination to supply our illustrations. It is a matter of some anxiety to me to observe how very much the popular religious literature of the day takes the form of narrative, may indeed be charged in some cases with the leading features for which novels are much and properly censured. He who desires to be a successful speaker to children must keep his mind on the subject at all times, must be ready to discover in the passing incidents of life a moral and a confirmation of Scripture Truth, and must be prepared to apply them as opportunities offer. And since religion is designed to enter into every-day life, it may well be explained and enforced by known instances of success or failure which come before us in our daily experience.

6. And this leads me to the last point of observation, which is, that all addresses should have a direct practical tendency. Knowledge is useful; scriptural knowledge is invaluable, but the ability to turn it to a practical use in the events of real life, is after all the great and important point. Now it may be possible, in the few minutes devoted to the closing address of the day, to say something which shall leave a deep and lasting impression on the mind. You will observe that I have all along insisted on the importance of the address being founded upon the Scripture lesson. There must be uniformity, consistency, and plan in the arrangements of the day in order to secure the greater effect on the mind, and I can conceive no method better adapted to affect the minds of the children and lead to a thorough conversion of their hearts to God, than the united and prayerful efforts of their minister, superintendent and teacher to impress them with the great facts and doctrines of the Bible. Whatever may be the final

result of the exciting scenes which have, in many cases, been connected with Revival movements, we may safely predict that the Church of Christ will be edified and built up, by the untiring efforts of Sunday school teachers, upon whose labours the gracious influence of the Spirit of God has been, and will be at all times, largely poured forth.

It will give me much pleasure to hear the candid and unbiassed opinion of our Christian friends on this important and interesting subject. It is quite possible to state difficulties and objections, and some of them will require mature deliberation before a general effort could be made to introduce addresses into every Sunday school in this parish. At all events it is highly desirable to investigate the subject thoroughly, and as I have, in the course of my life cheerfully co-operated in schools where both systems have been acted on, I do not entertain any prejudices which can render the plainest speaking unpalatable to my feelings.

Let me in conclusion only add that the work in which we are engaged is most important, but that it derives its real value and importance from the religious tone of the instruction imparted. We all feel that it is of very small moment to the children under our care, whether they may read their Bible with more or less fluency, but that it is of vital and eternal importance that its Divine Truths should sink into their hearts. Let then the sole object of your care, your prayers, your visits, your ceaseless efforts be to win the souls of your little flock to Christ their only and eternal Saviour, to assure their youthful minds that they have an everlasting Friend who is ready to undertake the charge of them through life, to blot out all their trangressions, to uphold them in all dangers and temptations, to sanctify them wholly. Never be satisfied with mere quietness of demeanour, accuracy in learning, punctuality in attendance,—these things may co-exist with a heart estranged from God. Seek for each, and all of them, that great change which is described in Scripture as so complete and total, that the figures which symbolize it are darkness to light, death to life. In all such efforts you will have the aid and approval of the Divine Saviour, the sympathy of the angelic hosts, the omnipotent power of the Spirit, and the Eternal love of the Father to encourage and sustain you. None on earth, none in heaven, watch the strugglings of the youthful mind in forsaking sin, with the interest which He feels who died to save them.

Plans and Intelligence.

TEACHERS' PRAYER UNION.

We again invite our readers to join in special prayer for the Sunday school cause, on the Tuesday morning in each week, for the particular objects set forth in the subjoined list; and we request the favour of their circulating this invitation amongst Sunday school Teachers and Christians generally, urging them to join with us in supplicating the Divine blessing on our work.

SUBJECTS FOR THE THIRD QUARTER.

October 7th.—For *the outpouring of the Holy Spirit*, and especially to guide both teachers and taught into all truth.

October 14th.—The *Sunday School Institute*, that its officers may be endued with wisdom from on high, and that its Publications may abound in Gospel truth.

October 21st.—The *Ministers of the Gospel*, and especially that they may in all things approve themselves as ambassadors for Christ.

October 28th.—For *all Superintendents*, and especially that they may be able to gain the love and respect of both Teachers and Scholars.

November 4th.—For *all Sunday School Teachers*, and especially that they may watch for the souls of their scholars as those that must give account, that they may do so with joy and not with sorrow.

November 11th.—For *all Sunday Scholars*, and especially that to each one the Gospel may be a savour of life unto life.

November 18th.—For *the Parents and Families of our Sunday Scholars*, and especially that the family altar may be reared in every house, and that they may be honoured with the Saviour's presence.

November 25th.—For *those who have passed from our Schools into the world*, and especially that they may hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering.

December 2nd.—For the *due observance of the Sabbath*, and especially that men may turn from seeking their own pleasure therein, and may consecrate it to God's service.

December 9th.—For the *Church of Christ*, that it may be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord.

December 16th.—For the *spread of the Gospel*, and especially for all Scripture Readers and Bible Distributors.

December 23rd.—For the *Church of England*, and especially that the Word of God may have free course and be glorified therein.

December 30th.—For *our Queen and Rulers*, and especially that they may order all things for the good of our Church and the glory of God.

*** Copies of this Paper may be obtained Free, on application by Letter to the Editors, at the Offices of the Institute, 41, Ludgate Hill, E.C.

THE PRINCE OF WALES'S VISIT TO THE TOMBS OF THE PATRIARCHS AT HEBRON.

[The following is an extract from a letter published in "the Times," in April last, which is attributed to the Rev. Canon Stanley. It contains so much information of especial interest to every student of the Bible, that we have thought it deserving of being preserved in our pages.]

"JERUSALEM, APRIL 9, 1862.

"You, and many others, will doubtless take a deep interest in hearing that the entrance of the Prince into the Mosque of Hebron has been effected. I will not trouble you with the long negotiations which preceded the event. Mr. Finn, the English Consul at Jerusalem, had prepared the way by requesting an order from the Porte for this purpose. The Vizierial letter, which was sent instead of a Firman, left the

matter to the discretion of the Governor of Jerusalem. The Governor, as long as he could, refused to take upon himself the responsibility of a step which had hitherto no precedent, even in the visits of Royal personages. By the mingled firmness and moderation of General Bruce in representing the Prince's wishes, and, I must add, through the adroitness of our interpreter, Mr. Noel Moore, the Governor's reluctance was at last overcome; and, on condition that the Prince should be accompanied only by a very small number, he consented to guarantee the safe inspection of all that was accessible to Musulmans themselves. On this understanding the Prince and his suite proceeded to Hebron. We were joined by Dr. Rosen, well known to travellers in Palestine from his profound knowledge of sacred geography, and, in this instance, doubly valuable as a companion from the special attention which he has paid to the topography of Hebron and its neighbourhood. On our arrival we found that the Governor had made every preparation for the safety of the experiment. The approach to the town was lined with troops; guards were stationed on the housetops. The Royal party, which, by the final arrangement of the Governor, comprised the members of the Prince's immediate suite, was conducted by a body of soldiers up to the entrance of the sacred enclosure. It is possible that these preparations were caused by excess of caution. In point of fact, there was no appearance of disaffection on the part of the population, beyond their absence from the streets as we passed; nor was there the slightest overt act of hostility or insult.

"You, who know the spot so well, will have followed us to the point where inquiring travellers have from generation to generation been checked in their approach to this, the most ancient and the most authentic of all the Holy Places of the Holy Land. Let me for a moment recapitulate its history. On the slope of that hill was, beyond all question, situated the rock with its double cave which Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite as his earliest possession in Palestine. 'There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah' (Gen. xlix. 31); and thither, when he himself died on the banks of the Nile, his body, embalmed with all the art of Egypt, was conveyed, with a vast Egyptian escort, to the frontiers of the Holy Land, and deposited, according to his dying wish, 'with his fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan' (Gen. xlix., 29, 30). Of all the great patriarchal family, Rachel alone is absent, in the tomb selected for her by Jacob on the spot where she died on the way to Bethlehem. We are not left to conjecture the reverence that was paid to this spot when the descendents of Abraham dwelt in the country and occupied it as their own. Josephus expressly informs us that it was surrounded by them with vast walls, existing even to his day. That these walls are the massive enclosures on the exterior of which so many eager eyes have been fixed in our own times can hardly be doubted. Their size, their bevilled frames, their agreement with the description of Josephus, which became still more conspicuous as we approached them close at hand, and saw, more distinctly than could have been otherwise possible, their polished, well-wrought surface, accords with an early Jewish origin, and with no other. But beyond this has hitherto been a matter, if not, indeed, of total ignorance, yet of uncertainty even more provoking than ignorance itself. From the account of the pilgrims of the seventh and eighth centuries we learn that already by that time a Christian church had been

erected within the Jewish enclosure. This Church, after the expulsion of the Christians by the Mussulmans, was known to have been converted into a mosque. Whether the cave was *visible* within the building is a matter on which the mediæval visitants to the spot vary so widely as to leave us in complete doubt. But that it lay within was never questioned by any, whether Jew or Mussulman; and the tremendous sanctity with which these last occupants have invested the spot is, in fact, a living witness of the unbroken local veneration with which all three religions have honoured the great Patriarch, whose title has, in the mouths of the native population, long superseded the ancient appellation of 'Hebron,' now called by no other name than 'El-Khalil'—'The Friend of God.' Within this sacred precinct, accordingly, for 600 years no European, except by stealth, has ever set foot. Three accounts alone have in modern times given anything like a description of the interior;—one extremely brief and confused, by an Italian servant of Mr. Bankes, who entered in disguise; another by an English clergyman (The Rev. Vere Monro), who does not however, appear to speak from his own testimony; and a third, more distinct, by Ali Bey, a Spanish renegade. While the other sacred places in Palestine, the mosque at Jerusalem, and the mosque at Damascus, have been thrown open at least to distinguished travellers, this still remains, even to royal personages, hermetically sealed. To break through this mystery, to clear up this uncertainty, even irrespectively of the extraordinary interest attaching to the spot, will I have no doubt, appear to many an object not unworthy of the first visit of a Prince of Wales to the Holy Land, and as such it has been felt by his Royal Highness and by those who have accompanied him on the present occasion.

"To resume my narrative, which I will confine as much as possible to such points as need not involve a discussion of mere antiquarian details. At the head of the staircase, which, by its long ascent, showed that the platform of the mosque was on the uppermost slope of the hill, and, therefore, above the level where, if anywhere, the sacred cave would be found, we entered the precincts of the mosque itself, and were received by one of its guardians, a descendant of one of the companions of Mohamed, with the utmost courtesy on his part, though not without deep groans from some of his attendants, redoubled as we moved from one sacred spot to another. We passed (without our shoes) through an open court into the mosque. With regard to the building itself, two points at once became apparent; first, that it had been originally a Byzantine Church. To any one acquainted with the Cathedral of St. Sophia at Constantinople, and with the monastic churches of Mount Athos, this is evident from the double narthex or portico, and from the four pillars of the nave. Secondly, that it had been converted at a much later period into a mosque. This is indicated by the pointed arches, and by the truncation of the apse. This building occupies (to speak roughly), about one-third of the platform. I proceed to describe its relation to the sepulchres of the Patriarchs. It is the innermost of the outer porticoes which contain the two first. In the recess on the right is the alleged tomb of Abraham, on the left that of Sarah, each guarded by silver gates. The shrine containing the tomb of Sarah we were requested not to enter, as being that of a woman. The shrine of Abraham, after a momentary hesitation, and with a prayer offered to the patriarch for permission to enter, was thrown open. The chamber is cased in marble. The tomb consists of a coffin-like structure, like most Moslem tombs, built up of plastered stone or marble, and hung with carpets,—green, and embroidered with gold. The three which cover this

tomb are said to have been presented by Mohammed II., Selim I., and the late Sultan, Abdul Medjid. I need hardly say that this tomb (and the same remark applies to all the others) does not profess to be more than a cenotaph, raised above the actual grave which lies beneath. But it was impossible not to feel a thrill of unusual emotion at standing in a relation so near to such a spot—an emotion, I may add, enhanced by the rare occasion which had opened the gates of that consecrated place (as the guardian of the mosque expressed it) 'to no one less than the eldest son of the Queen of England.' Within the area of the church or mosque were shown, in like manner, the tombs of Isaac and Rebekah. They differed from the two others in being placed under separate chapels, and closed, not with silver, but iron gates. To Rebekah's tomb the same decorous rule of the exclusion of male visitors naturally applied as in the case of Sarah's. But, on requesting to see the tomb of Isaac, we were entreated not to enter, and on asking, with some surprise, why an objection which had been conceded for Abraham should be raised in the case of his far less eminent son, were answered that the difference lay in the characters of the two Patriarchs:—'Abraham was full of loving kindness; he had withstood even the resolution of God against Sodom and Gomorrah; he was goodness itself, and would overlook any affront. But Isaac was proverbially jealous, and it was exceedingly dangerous to exasperate him. When Ibrahim Pasha (as conqueror of Palestine) had endeavoured to enter, he had been driven out by Isaac, and fell back as if thunderstruck.'

"The chapel, in fact, contains nothing of interest; but I mention this story both for the sake of the singular sentiment which it expresses, and also because it well illustrates the peculiar feeling which (as we were told) had tended to preserve the sanctity of the place—an awe amounting to terror of the great personages who lay beneath, and who would, it was supposed, be sensitive to any disrespect shown to their graves, and revenge it accordingly.

"The tombs of Jacob and Leah were shown in recesses corresponding to those of Abraham and Sarah, but in a separate cloister, opposite the entrance of the mosque. Against Leah's tomb, as seen through the grate, two green banners reclined, the origin and meaning of which were unknown. The gates of Jacob's shrine were opened without difficulty, but it calls for no special remark.

"Thus far the monuments of the mosque adhere strictly to the Biblical account, as given above. The variation which follows rests, as I am informed by Dr. Rosen, on the general tradition of the country (justified, perhaps, by an ambiguous expression in *Josephus*), that the body of Joseph, after having been deposited first at Shechem (Josh. xxiv. 32) was subsequently transported to Hebron. But the peculiar situation of this alleged tomb agrees with the exceptional character of the tradition. It is in a domed chamber attached to the enclosure from the outside, and reached, therefore, by an aperture broken through the massive wall itself, and thus visible on the exterior of the southern side of the wall. It is less costly than the others, and it is remarkable that, although the name of his wife (according to the Mussulman version, Zuleika) is inserted in the certificates given to pilgrims who have visited the mosque, no grave having that appellation is shown. No other tombs were exhibited in the mosque. Two, resembling those of Isaac and Rebekah, which were seen, (by one of our party only) within an adjacent smaller mosque, were afterwards explained to us as merely ornamental.

"It will be seen that up to this point

no mention has been made of the subject of the greatest interest to all of us—namely, the sacred cave itself in which one at least of the patriarchal family may still be believed to repose intact—the embalmed body of Jacob. It may well be supposed that to this object our inquiries were throughout directed. One indication alone of the cavern beneath was visible. In the interior of the mosque, at the corner of the shrine of Abraham, was a small circular hole, about eight inches across, of which one foot above the pavement was built of strong masonry, but of which the lower part, as far as we could see and feel, was of the living rock. This cavity appeared to open into a dark space beneath, and that space (which the guardians of the mosque believed to extend under the whole platform) can hardly be anything else than the ancient cavern of Machpelah. This was the only aperture which the guardians recognised. Once, they said, 2,500 years ago, a servant of a great king had penetrated through some other entrance. He descended in full possession of his faculties, and of remarkable corpulence, he returned blind, deaf, withered, and crippled. Since then, the entrance was closed, and this aperture alone was left, partly for the sake of suffering the holy air of the cave to escape into the mosque, and be scented by the faithful; partly for the sake of allowing a lamp to be let down, by a chain which we saw suspended at the mouth, to burn upon the sacred grave. We asked whether it could not be lighted now, 'No,' they said; 'the saint likes to have a lamp at night, but not in the full daylight.' With that glimpse into the dark void, we and the world without must be content to be satisfied. Other entrances may exist, or have existed, and the knowledge we have acquired of the different parts of the platform would enable us to indicate the points where such apertures might be expected. But, for the present, it was the full conviction of those of the party best qualified to judge, that no other entrance is known to the Mussulmans themselves. The unmistakable terror to which I have before alluded is of itself a guarantee that they would not enter into the cave if they could, and the general language of the Arabic histories of the Mosque is in the same direction.

"The results of the Prince's visit may, perhaps, be disappointing to you and to those who hoped for a more direct solution of the mysteries of Hebron. But they are, I am convinced, all that can be at present obtained, and I will, in conclusion, draw attention to two or three indirect benefits which may be derived from the use which has been made of this great opportunity. In the first place, by our entrance, the first step has been taken for the removal of this bar of exclusion from this most sacred and interesting spot. Had the Prince and his advisers shrunk from pressing the claim which the Turkish Government had conceded, or had the Pasha of Jerusalem persisted in repudiating the responsibility which his Government threw upon him, the doors of the Mosque would have been closed with a still firmer hold than before. As it is, although the relaxation may be slight and gradual, and although the advantage gained must be used with the utmost caution and forbearance, yet it is impossible not to feel that some effect will be produced even on the devotees of Hebron, when they feel that the patriarchs have not suffered any injury or affront, and that even Isaac rests tranquilly in his grave. And Englishmen may fairly rejoice that this advantage in the cause of religious tolerance and of Biblical knowledge has been attained in the person of the heir to the English throne, out of regard to the position which he and his country hold in the Eastern world.

"In the second place, it will be a

considerable gain to future inquirers that a survey of the Mosque has been taken (however imperfectly) by persons who saw it not in disguise, or by stealth, but at leisure, and with their attention fixed on the objects most to be sought for. Perhaps the above account contains little more than might be gleaned from those of the early pilgrims, or of Ali Bey. (The latter narrative in particular is, as you will see, substantially corroborated.) But it enables us to understand them better, to correct their deficiencies, and to rectify their confusion. To do this in the present letter would require more time and space than I can command; but I am surprised to find how much light this short inspection has thrown on passages which before seemed to me irrecoverably dark. Dr. Rosen, you will also be glad to hear, has, with the help of one of our party, constructed a ground plan of the whole platform, and I trust that these results, in his hands and in the hands of other Biblical students, will serve to render the Prince's visit not merely an occasion to be long remembered with gratitude by those whose entrance was thus facilitated, but a real advance in the knowledge of this world-renowned spot. The existence and exact situation of the cave, the closer view of the ancient enclosure within and without, the origin and arrangements of the Mosque, the precise relation of the different tombs to each other, and the general conformity of the traditions of the Mosque to the accounts of the Bible and of the early travellers are now for the first time clearly ascertained. To explore the recesses of the cave and to discover within them (if so be) the embalmed remains of Jacob must be reserved for another generation, for which this visit will have been the best preparation.

"P.S. It may be observed that the shrines of Isaac and Rebekah, standing as they do in the centre of the Mosque, occupy a position altogether unusual in Mussulman buildings, where the corners are the places of honourable burial. This and their peculiar structure would lead us to suppose that they stand on the exact sites described by the early Christian pilgrims. The belief of the guardians of the Mosque is that the massive enclosure was built by genii under the direction of Solomon. The Mosque they ascribe to the Egyptian Sultan Kalarun. They account for the tomb of Joseph by saying that his body was buried in the Nile for 1,005 years, after which the secret was revealed to Moses by an Egyptian, on condition that Moses should marry his daughter. Moses did so, and carried off the body to Hebron. It would seem from the account of Arculf that there were seven tombs there in his day, but that the seventh was that of Adam. The tradition of Adam's burial in Hebron, however, appears to be a Christian (not a Mussulman) tradition, founded only on the Vulgate. It occurred both to Dr. Rosen and myself that Arculf's expression about the *low* wall (*humili muro*) might be explained by his having seen it only from the inside of the platform, whereas *modern* travellers have seen it only from the outside, where its height is much more striking."

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION CONVENTION.

Our Dissenting brethren, the Committee of the Sunday School Union, have taken advantage of the present International Exhibition season, to convene a General Meeting of ministers, Sunday school teachers, and others practically interested in the important work of Sunday school instruction.

Preparatory services, addresses to children, and teachers' prayer-meetings in schools connected with the Union took place on Sunday, the 31st of August. The introductory Meeting of the General Convention was held on Monday evening, the 1st of September, in the Lecture Hall of the Union Jubilee Memorial Building, 56, Old Bailey. Alderman Challis had been announced to preside; but, being unavoidably absent, his place was filled by Alderman ABBISS.

The appointed business was the reading of a series of papers on "The History and Influence of the Sunday schools in the United Kingdom." That relating to England was delivered by Mr. W. H. WATSON one of the Hon. Secretaries of the Union. After describing the popular ignorance connected with a low moral tone, prevailing in the last century, he said he was supported by the authority of Lord Mahon, and of other distinguished authors, in attributing a great portion of the improved aspect which the nation now presented to the exertions of Robert Raikes and his successors. In London, Sunday schools owed their origin to Mr. Wm. Fox and Mr. Jonas Hanway, whose memory, as a philanthropist, would long outlast his fame as a traveller. There were now three millions of the rising generation in this country who were every week brought under religious instruction, and it was, therefore, no wonder that it should have been found practicable to extend to the working classes political privileges which they had never enjoyed before. And for this improvement the credit was equally due to the Church of England and to the different Dissenting bodies.

The Rev. Dr. URWICK, of Dublin, read a paper on Ireland, observing he had made a recent tour in that country for the purpose of collecting facts. Having briefly sketched the commencement of the movement (which was begun in 1770 by the Rev. Dr. Kennedy, a curate in the county of Down), he showed that there were now upwards of 21,000 Protestant teachers and 233,000 scholars in Ireland. At the present time there was one Protestant Sunday scholar in twenty-seven of the gross population; but excluding the Roman Catholics the proportion was one in four and two-thirds.

The Rev. J. INGLIS (author of various well-known Sunday school works) spoke on Scotland, observing that the statements with regard to the religious condition of that country, prior to the introduction of Sunday schools, were exceedingly conflicting. Generally, however, family teaching was extensively prevalent. Catechisings by the minister, embracing all the members of the flock, were also an old feature in the Scottish Church system. The formal introduction of Sunday schools might be said to date from the year 1782, and so greatly had they since spread that now there were 40,000 teachers and 400,000 scholars, to which must be added some 70,000 or 80,000 young men and women in ministers' Sabbath classes.

ON THE SECOND DAY Alderman ABBISS again presided, and Mr. CHARLES REED opened the subject of the morning by a paper on "The Great Object of Sunday school Teaching," which he defined to be purely religious instruction, and not, in any sense, a mere supplement to the secular education of the week-day school. He insisted strongly on the necessity of spiritual mindedness in teachers. He also advocated the setting apart of class-rooms for elder scholars. The various practical points brought out in the paper were discussed in detail by the members of the Conference. In the afternoon the Conference re-assembled under the presidency of Mr. Henry Lee, of Salford. Mr. R. N. COLLINS introduced the question of "Sunday School Classification." His paper was marked by

much ability, having the merit of making a dry subject very interesting. The discussion was necessarily of a somewhat technical character.

The evening was occupied by a large and interesting Meeting in the Egyptian Hall of the Mansion House, to hear addresses from the Foreign and Colonial delegates on "The State and Prospects of Sunday schools abroad." Alderman ABBISS presided, and offered a very hearty welcome to the foreign delegates.

The first speakers represented America. The Rev. J. H. VINCENT, of Illinois, spoke of the deep root which the Sunday school system had taken in the United States. The name of Raikes was as much cherished in America as it was here. There were, indeed, Sunday schools there before his day, but it was he who gave them the great impulse, and among the many blessings which America had received from England was this one of Sunday schools. He strongly insisted that Sunday schools ought to be regarded as an integral and essential part of the Church, and not as a mere appendage; and incidentally passed a high eulogium on the efforts in this cause of Dr. Tyng, of New York, an Episcopalian clergyman, and a warm-hearted and Catholic-spirited man. Mr. CHAPIN, from Massachusetts, next gave some American Sunday school statistics. Of the entire population of America, free and slave, civilised and uncivilised, one in 8¼ attended Sunday schools. In Massachusetts (excluding the Roman Catholics) the number attending the schools of Evangelical churches was one in 5¼, and this was almost the general average in the New England States. In New York the attendance at the Evangelical schools was as 1 to 11 of the population.

France was represented by Pasteur PAUMIER, of Paris, the Secretary of the French Sunday School Union. Their Society was, he said, a new one, but it already embraced 600 schools, of which 400 belonged to the Reformed Evangelical Church of France, 29 to the Lutherans, 58 to the Independents, 29 to the Methodists, 9 to English congregations, 7 to Baptists, and 1 to Calvenistic Methodists. The Rev. J. P. COOK, of Calais, gave further information to the same effect. He then dwelt on the chief characteristics of French Sunday schools. Among them were, (1) the great facility of enforcing order; (2), the special interest and general personal co-operation of the pasteurs; and (3), the absence of any kind of teaching except the Bible. Speaking comparatively, there were fewer teachers, and larger classes than in England, but the average qualifications were higher than those which obtained in this country.

Switzerland was represented by the Rev. Professor NAGEL, of Neufchatel, who said Sunday schools had existed in French Switzerland for more than thirty years. In Geneva there were about 650 children in attendance on those of the evangelical churches, and some 1,566 children, divided into classes, were accustomed to attend five catechetical services. In the city of Neufchatel there were now 776 Sunday scholars, without reckoning about 100 infant scholars, in a population of from 7,000 to 8,000, of which about 1,000 were Roman Catholics and Jews, and 2,000 were Germans. In the canton of Neufchatel, with a population of about 75,000, there were about 90 Sunday schools, with from 4,000 to 5,000 children.

The Rev. Mr. MALAN, Moderator of the Waldensian Church, addressed the Meeting in French, the Rev. J. P. Cook interpreting. The Waldensian Church, he said, had not failed in this work; there were Sunday schools in all the old parishes, and in every mission station from the foot of Mont Blanc to the foot of Etna. The work in Italy, though only yet in its infancy, had

already been attended with success and blessing. The number of the children in the various schools was about 2,000, and the basis of every school was the Bible only.

The succeeding speakers represented the British Colonies. The Rev. W. CUTHBERTSON, of Sydney, gave a favourable account of the spread of Sunday schools in Australia, notwithstanding various practical difficulties. All denominations of Protestants took a lively interest in the work. There was nothing which Dr. Barker, the Metropolitan Bishop of Sydney, had more at heart, and the same might be said of the other ministers. He estimated the total number of Sunday scholars in Australia at from 110,000 to 150,000.

The Rev Mr. RYCROFT followed, with information respecting the Bahamas. There was not a settlement in those islands in which there was not a Sunday school.

The proceedings closed with a vote of thanks to the Lord Mayor for the use of the Hall, and to Alderman Abbiss.

ON THE THIRD DAY the subject for the morning sitting was "The Qualifications of an Efficient Sunday School Teacher." The Rev. SAMUEL MARTIN, of Westminster Chapel, presided.

The Rev. JAMES INGLIS introduced the question, and, in doing so, pointed out the necessity there was for having a good class of Sunday school teachers. They might get a very efficient teacher by taking a person of ordinary talents of ordinary education, of ordinary piety, and of ordinary zeal.

Among the speakers, in the discussion which followed, were Mr. Manton, the Mayor of Birmingham; the Rev. Dr. M'Clintock, from America; Mr. S. Beadle, Mr. J. D. Taylor, of Halifax; Mr. Simpson, Mr. Franklin, of Birmingham; Mr. Todd, and other gentlemen.

At the afternoon meeting (presided over by Alderman Manton, of Birmingham), Mr. J. G. FITCH, M.A., of the British and Foreign School Society's Normal College, read a paper on "The Training of Sunday School Teachers for their Work." He enforced the necessity of special training in the art of teaching. An animated discussion followed.

The evening Meeting was presided over by the Rev. C. B. ALFORD, Principal of the Metropolitan Training College, Highbury. The usual proceedings were varied by the introduction of specimen lessons, by experienced Sunday school teachers, taken from the Union programme—viz., "The Christian Warfare," founded on 2 Tim. ii. 1—7: iv. 1—8; and Ephes. vi., being the well-known passages relating to the Christian soldier and the Christian armour. The first lesson was given by Mr. W. F. GROSER, to an infant class. The next was an elementary class of girls, more advanced, taught by Miss LANGLEY. The third was a Scripture class, also of girls, still further advanced. The examination was conducted by Mr. T. DREW, and was equally satisfactory and interesting. The Chairman closed the Meeting by addressing the teachers present on the importance of their work, and the duty of taking advantage of the opportunities of training, &c., provided for them.

ON THE FOURTH DAY the Chair was occupied by MR. SAMUEL MORLEY. The subject of discussion was "Sunday school Extension in the Upper and Lower Classes of Society," which was introduced by the Rev. G. ALLEN, of St. Thomas's Islington, and Mr. F. CUTHBERTSON, of the Sunday School Union. Mr. Allen's paper was devoted to the portion of the question affecting the upper classes, and was remarkably lucid. In his parish Bible-classes had been formed, presided over by Christians of eminence, and had proved highly successful. Mr. Cuth-

bertson's paper, on the other branch of the subject, described the wretched condition in which the lower classes lived, and the reformation among them that was so ardently desired.

A Deputation from the International Temperance and Prohibition Convention was then introduced, who presented an address, inviting Sunday school teachers to give the Temperance movement in all its branches the important aid of their support. The Memorial was received, and entered on the minutes of the Convention.

In the afternoon Mr. THOMAS CHAMBERS, the Common Sergeant, presided, when Mr. J. H. COOPER, of Birmingham, read a paper on the "Internal Arrangements and Collateral Agencies of the Sunday school," in which he protested against the practice of connecting instrumental bands of music with Sunday schools, and also expressed disapproval of the system which had latterly sprung up of taking the children annual excursions into the country. The paper having been discussed at some length, the Conference was closed.

The evening was devoted to an Aggregate Meeting in Exeter Hall, when the chair was occupied by Mr. C. GILPIN, M.P., who, in brief but cordial terms, expressed his interest in the Sunday school work. Mr. W. H. WATSON (one of the Hon. Secs.) read a paper, embodying a retrospect of the operations of the Sunday School Union, especially since its Jubilee, and the erection of the Memorial building, nine years ago.

The following resolution was then proposed:—"That this Meeting, contemplating the past history and present position of the Sunday school system, desires to record its deep conviction of the value and adaptation of Sunday school instruction to the moral and spiritual requirements of the youth of all nations, irrespective of social rank; and fervently prays that the time may speedily arrive when its importance shall be universally recognised, and its influence extended throughout the world."

In speaking to this resolution, the Rev. W. CUTHBERTSON, of Sydney, New South Wales, dwelt on the working of the Sunday school system in Australia, the direct and collateral objects to be kept in view, and the dangers to be avoided, closing with an emphatic warning against mere secular teaching.

The next speakers were Mr. A. WOODRUFF, of Brooklyn, New York, and Professor NAGEL, of Neufchatel.

The Rev. C. W. BOLTON, of New York, who attended as the representative of the New York Sunday School Union, gave interesting details of Sunday school efforts in the worst parts of the city of New York. Among the largest Sunday schools in that city was one of 1,000 children, connected with the church of the Rev. Dr. Tyng. The children of that school had themselves raised the funds and built a Mission Sunday school, which formed the nucleus of his (Mr. Bolton's) ministerial sphere, and that Mission school now comprised 925 children. The work was still spreading in the same manner.

The Rev. Mr. MALAN (the Vaudois Moderator) represented Italy, and the Rev. Dr. M'CLINTOCK, of Paris, appeared as the representative of the American Methodist Episcopal Church.

The last of the foreign speakers was the Rev. J. P. COOK, of Calais, who urged more particularly the duty of prayer.

Another resolution, expressive of welcome to the foreign and colonial delegates, and of hope for the results of the Convention, was moved by the Rev. B. FIELD, seconded by Mr. COOPER, and carried with acclamation.

The Convention was followed by a *soirée*, held on Friday, the 5th of September. The leading feature in the proceedings was the cordial interchange

of courtesies between the English and foreign delegates, and the hearty expression of friendship and oneness in the Sunday school work which marked the leave-taking of the foreign brethren.

After tea, the company dispersed through the different rooms of the building, to inspect the various objects which were set out on the tables. After addresses in the lecture hall, this interesting re-union was brought to a close with prayer and praise.

Sunday School Institute.

THE QUARTERLY RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

In the past Quarter a continuous series of meetings have been held at the rooms of the Institute, the first of which was

THE DEVOTIONAL MEETING,

on Thursday evening, the 3rd of July, which (in the absence of the Rev. E. Auriol, M.A., who was unexpectedly prevented from attending,) was conducted on behalf of the Committee by Mr. Sandby, assisted by Mr. Clayton.

The course of

TRAINING LESSONS

commenced in the preceding Quarter was continued as follows:—

Thursday, July 10th. A Lesson to an Elementary Class. 2 Kings v. 1—14. By Mr. Reid.

Thursday, July 17th. A Bible Class Lesson. Ps. cvii. By Mr. Fleet

And,

LADIES' TRAINING LESSONS,

on Thursday, July 24th, for a Bible Class on "Justification" which is printed in substance, in another part of the present number of the Quarterly Magazine; and on Thursday, July 31st, for a Testament Class, on "The Lord's Prayer."

A SERIES OF LECTURES

to Senior Scholars belonging to schools in connexion with the Institute, and such Junior Teachers as wished to attend, has been delivered as follows:—

Thursday, 14th August. "Why am I a Churchman?" By Mr. Norton.

Thursday, 21st August. "Knowledge the Handmaid of Religion." By Mr. G. A. T. Hill.

Thursday, 28th August. "A Blade of Grass." By Mr. Hartnell.

Thursday, 4th Sept. "The Book and its Missions." By Mr. Heald.

Thursday, 11th Sept. "The Crusades." By Mr. F. L. Mills.

Thursday, 18th Sept. "Astronomy." Mr. N. E. Green.

Thursday, 25th Sept. "Money." By Mr. S. B. Power.

A CONVERSATIONAL MEETING

was held on Thursday evening, the 7th of August, at which the important and always interesting subject of "*Sunday School Management*" was discussed by the Teachers and Superintendents present. The conversation was opened by Mr. Fleet.

In addition to these Meetings at the Rooms of the Institute, a series of Training Lessons has been arranged for delivery at Penge, Surrey, the Rev. D. Mc.Anally in the chair, as follows:—

22nd Sept. To a Bible Class. By Mr. Norton.

29th „ To a Testament Class. By Mr. Power.

6th Oct. To an Elementary Class. By Mr. Reid.

In connection with the labours of the Young Men's Society, the Committee have arranged to deliver a series of Training Lessons at St. George's School Room, Bloomsbury, as follows:—

Oct. 21st. To a Testament Class, by Mr. HEALD.—Subject, Luke xvii. 11—19.

Nov. 18th. To a Bible Class, by Mr. NORTON.—Subject, Isaiah lv.

Dec. 16th. To an elementary Class, by Mr. REID.—Subject, Matt. xv. 21—28.

And at the ISLINGTON Branch, on Nov. 25th, a Training Lesson to a Testament Class by Mr. REID, Subject, the "Transfiguration," Mark ix. 1—10.

At the request of the South London Sunday School Association, Mr. NORTON will give a Training Lesson, on Dec. 16th, at the Bolton Street School Room.

DEPUTATIONS

from the Institute, will proceed to BOSTON, Lincolnshire, on the 24th November, to a Teachers' Meeting, and also to BELFAST and its neighbourhood during the month of October.

The next

DEVOTIONAL MEETING

will be held on Thursday evening, the 2nd October, at half-past eight o'clock, when it is hoped that the Rev. E. AUBIOL will conduct the proceedings.

The following books have recently been added to

THE LIBRARY,

for the use of the members of the Institute, *viz.*,—

Night Scenes of the Bible, by Rev. C. D. Bell, M.A.

Justification by Faith, by the Bishop of Ossory and Ferns.

The Adopted Child, by the Author of Katherine Douglas.

Sunsets on the Hebrew Mountains, by the Rev. J. R. Macduff.

Good Words, for 1860 and 1861.

Footsteps of the Reformers in Foreign Lands.

Sunsets and Sunshine, or varied aspects of Life, by Rev. Erskine Neale.

Forty Years' experience in Sunday Schools, by Rev. Dr. Tyng, of New York.

The Way to Life; Sermons by Dr. Guthrie.

Life of Arthur Vandeleur, Major R. A., by Miss Marsh.

Twenty Years in the Church, and Elketon Rectory, by Rev. James Pycroft.

Due notice will be given of the

NEW PUBLICATIONS

of the Institute for the year 1863. The Committee would solicit the help of their friends in promoting the circulation of all of these, among those engaged in the work of the Sunday School, and would also invite their attention to our

MAGAZINES,

the circulation of which might be largely increased, if our friends would kindly make them known to others similarly employed, and to whom they might prove of advantage, and also invite them to become regular subscribers for them. The Committee receive very pleasing assurances of the assistance which many who are teaching in Sunday Schools derive from the encouragements, suggestions, and Notes on Lessons thus regularly supplied; but they also discover continually that, though thus by God's blessing made useful to many, there is a much larger circle of fellow-labourers to whom these publications are altogether unknown. The New Year is a favourable season for commencing periodicals, and we trust, with the help of those who are acquainted with them, that in the coming year, the QUARTERLY and the MONTHLY Magazines for Teachers, and the SCHOLARS' COMPANION for our young friends may be adopted in many schools, and find many more readers than in the past. May we here also invite, not only assistance in the literary part of our work,—for this we need greatly, that new thoughts and minds may be employed in it—but also

that those into whose hands our Magazines may fall, will be good enough to suggest any improvements in them, or state any particular requirements in their own case which they may not now altogether meet—the object of the Committee being to make them increasingly useful, and to give all the assistance in their power to those desiring to perfect themselves as teachers in our Sunday Schools.

The following additions to

THE FUNDS

of the Institute, are gratefully acknowledged:—

DONATIONS.

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. Oakeley	25	0	0
E. Maw, Esq.	1	0	0
Mrs. Silver	1	0	0
James Gerrard, Esq.	0	17	6
Miss Dixon	0	5	0

NEW ANNUAL SUBSCRIBERS.

Miss E. Brent	0	5	0
Miss Fuller	1	1	0
J. Nanson, Esq.	1	1	0

NEW SUBSCRIBING SCHOOLS.

Barnwell Abbey	0	10	6
Weston	0	10	6
Burton Latimer	0	10	6
St. Luke's, Wellington Road	1	1	0

Notices of Books.

"THE SPIRIT IN THE WORD: Facts gathered from a thirty years' Ministry. By W. Weldon Champneys, M.A., Canon Residentiary of St. Paul's, and Vicar of St. Pancras." London, Seeley, Jackson and Halliday.

Though a small book, this is one of great interest and value. None who know the peculiarly attractive style of its author, his pointed sentences, his abundant illustrations, and his simple but convincing arguments, will doubt that such a subject treated by him would be made interesting: and those who know how long and earnestly, how patiently and devotedly he has fulfilled the duties of his sacred office, chiefly in one of the large and most unpromising parishes of the east of London, must feel that such "facts" as he has gathered together from among the records of his past labours, are not only a comforting assurance to himself of the Divine blessing on his work, and that the Spirit of God has accompanied the Word preached by him, but also, what the author wishes them to be considered, an *evidence* of the truth of the religion taught in that Word—the testimony of experience, in its manifold forms, to the power of the Divine Word in our own day, analagous to that given by the blind man in the days of our Lord, "One thing I *know*—whereas I was blind, now I see." In telling what the Lord has done for our own souls, and in pointing to the results of a true faith in His Word upon the minds and hearts of others, we possess an argument for the truth of the religion we profess, easily to be understood even by the most ignorant, and not to be gainsaid by the most bigoted or prejudiced unbeliever.

The instances collected together in this little volume are varied, touching, and important, as the accuracy of each is vouched for by the testimony of an eye-witness. Nor has the author failed to suggest the lessons, and to enforce the arguments which each illustration is calculated to afford; while among these incidental teachings, are some points of great value to every one desiring to make known God's truth, or employed in the task of teaching. Here, for instance, is a suggestion worth the notice of the visitor to the poor:—"Abrupt intrusion on them at unreasonable times, interruption of their meals, a patronising manner, an air of conscious superiority, a tone of condescension, inquiries that savour more of impertinent

curiosity than of kind and sympathising interest—all these should be carefully avoided . . . . Acting on these convictions, I have always, in my visits among the poor, tried to go at times most convenient to them." As an illustration of the good effects of such kind considerateness, an instance is given of the case of a young man prejudiced against religion, upon whom the author called in his sickness.—"Before I left I said 'will you allow me to call again?' He did not say no, and I left him. I called again and again, and on my fourth visit he said, 'Do you know, sir, what I meant to say to you when you first called?' 'No.' 'I had made up my mind to tell you not to call again.' 'What,' said I, 'prevented your doing so?' '*You asked me whether you might call, and I could not find in my heart to say No*, and now I thank God that you *did* call.'"

There is a very valuable testimony in the chapter entitled "Laying hold on the promises" to the value of Confirmation in affording the clergy periodically the opportunity of giving simple catechetical instruction to the young, and a striking illustration of its effects upon older persons. In another chapter (p. 95-6), when referring to a visit to a sick Christian child, there is the following touching scene described:—"'I am very thirsty,' she said, 'will *you* give me a little wine?' Her mother handed it to me, and I put the glass into her thin trembling hand. 'Blessed Father,' she said, lifting up her eyes, 'I thank Thee for this, and I thank you, sir, and you, dear mother.' 'Alice,' said I, 'of what does that wine remind you?' 'Of the blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for me; but sir,' she said, 'you did not *give me any bread*.' No, I had not, and I did not, for she took me entirely by surprise. I have only once regretted that I did not do so, but I have regretted it *ever since*. *Now* I should not hesitate for one instant. *Such* ren have as real a right to the outward visible signs as they have a real share and interest in the body and blood."

A conversation with a barefooted boy in the street leads the author to remark on the reverent tone of voice which should be employed in uttering the name of our God and Saviour: "I shall never forget the tone of deep quiet reverence with which that poor little shoeless boy repeated the name 'Jesus.' I have often asked the same question and obtained the same answer, but I have often been pained and not pleased at the *tone* in which that name has been pronounced, at which every knee shall one day 'bow;' of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, when every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' I have heard that Holy Name uttered loudly, sharply, irreverently, and it has pained me, just as I have heard the conversations, arguments, and powerful and conclusive reasonings of the meek, and gentle Saviour *read* in a tone of sharpness, and self-confidence, with which, we may be quite sure, they were never uttered by Him 'who spake as never man spake.'" May not this hint be usefully applied both to Sunday scholars and their teachers?

But there are some passages in this interesting book bearing yet more directly upon the work in which we are specially engaged, and which will give it especial attractions to all who are concerned in the training of the young. In a chapter, recounting how a teacher and a scholar from different schools in Whitechapel met years after in the bush in New Zealand, and strengthened their mutual faith there, the author thus introduces the subject:—"Much of our work as Christian teachers is that of men sowing, not only 'beside all waters'—wisely choosing the best ground, even that which is rich and soft and moist, the young heart as yet

unexhausted by actual sin, with its affections still tender and ready to receive impressions; but our work is that of men 'casting our bread upon the waters.' Men, as they see us work, might say, 'surely it is thrown away; you will never see those poor children again: they are so migratory in their habits, so irregular in their attendance, that like the changing waters, they will move away, and your work will be lost.' Not so: if we cast 'precious seed,' even the seed taken out of God's own Book—that granary of life eternal—upon many hearts, it will sink into them; it will disappear, but it will not be lost. If the Eternal Spirit only quicken its latent germ of life, if the Sun of Righteousness shine upon it, that seed will strike root in the softened heart, and bring forth fruit after many days, 'first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.'"

The author's opinion as to the value of ministerial work among the school children is very decisive; he says "I am thoroughly convinced that no work towards the ministers of Christ more richly than that of visiting and *personally teaching* the children of his schools. I do not mean that he should go in and take a class now and then and ascertain their proficiency as an *inspector*, but that he should regularly visit and teach the children, as an integral part of his flock, as their *minister*. He is, as I conceive, bound to do so—as much as he is to teach the grown members of his congregation. 'Feed my lambs' was said by the Chief Shepherd, before He said 'Feed my sheep;' and that command to His penitent and loved apostle is not less said to us, His under-shepherds. I am perfectly certain that such teaching is not thrown away; that the associations created in the children's minds are not soon, if ever, blotted out. I have myself seen, after long years of absence, the careless man who had gone far astray from the innocence of his childhood into folly and sin, put back in an instant into the recollection and associations of his earliest and happiest days by the voice and face of his old minister and teacher.....The minister of Christ who has been the loving teacher of the children of his parish will never be forgotten. The love of children is not hard to win, and once gained is seldom or never lost. I am so convinced of this that when the lambs of the flock have not had *their* portion of tender grass, however we may have led the sheep of Christ into the green pastures, I feel as if we have not done our work. Others may have done theirs faithfully, but our work, as His servants who has said, 'Feed my lambs' has not been done."

We are greatly tempted to give our readers the benefit of the author's views on the way of fostering and encouraging a missionary spirit among children, and his account of the means he adopted so successfully in a large parish—but we feel we have given specimens enough to show how valuable the book in all its parts can be made, and we trust it will speedily be found if not in every teacher's possession, at least in every school library, that all may profit by the useful proofs it affords of God's means of blessing His Word, the encouragements it gives to those who are working in His name, and the many suggestions it contains, as to the right application of the great truths of our holy faith to our souls, and to those of others, in whatever condition we or they may be found.

We can only briefly notice some other books lying before us.

The second volume of the Religious Tract Society's new edition of the WORKS OF JOHN HOWE, M.A., contains three of the most admired of the treatises by that eminent man, whose appearance attracted the attention of Cromwell, as he saw him at one of the services at Whitehall, and led to his

being appointed to preach before him, and eventually to his becoming his domestic chaplain. All the writings of Howe are worthy of our careful study, for the high spirituality, deep heart-searching, and calm reasoning contained in them.

A little volume of SHORT FAMILY PRAYERS by H. N. Champney, of York, (pp. 77) London: Wertheim & Co., is to be commended for supplying an addenda to other manuals of devotion, by presenting a series of brief prayers, based upon readings from successive portions of selected books of the Old and New Testament, and directly applying the lessons taught in these Scriptures to devotional purposes. The language employed is simple, natural, and earnest, and neither the wants of the young, nor of Sunday school teachers are forgotten by the author.

In "OUR LITURGY the expression of a life, not formal thought: by Clericus" (pp. 11, Wertheim & Co.), the Author proceeds to state and enforce the propositions of the title. He regards the Liturgy as fulfilling the office of a heart—the seat of life—to the Church, and not of an understanding; and properly insists that if its purely devotional purpose be borne in mind it will only be as a whole, and not in each expression separately, that it will be regarded as expressing a system of doctrine. Doubtless many of the common objections made to, and difficulties found in, the Liturgy arise from the neglect of this necessary distinction.

THE PARENT AND THE SCHOOL, by W. J. Unwin, M.A., Principal of Homerton College, p.p. 8., Longman. This tract is intended for parents, and is a somewhat too concise statement of some highly important principles and duties connected with the subject.

ITALIAN NAVVIES on the West Swiss Railway, 16mo. p.p., 84., Wertheim. We much wish to draw the attention of our readers to this little Tract, a simple, unpretending, but interesting narrative. It is well adapted to call forth active sympathy, and also by showing what has been done in the fields thus opened to view, to confirm our faith in the power of that Word which is meant for all men, and suited to the state of all, whether they be the hard-working labourers on our own railways, or Italian Navvies, a character which at first may seem as novel to many of our readers as it did to us.

A pamphlet of 32 pages, by a layman, entitled "OUR OLD PRAYER MEETING," is not intended by its title to conceal from the reader the nature of the service described in it, but to show how fully our Liturgy supplies all that is needed for such gatherings—viz., the intelligent spiritual progress of those who attend them, and the worship and glory of God. It describes the spiritual nature of the service, and defends it from the charge of formality and coldness, when properly employed, against those who would substitute for it extempore services of a more irregular and exciting, but not more fervent and devout character.

Notices to Correspondents.

Contributions are thankfully acknowledged from the Rev. H. J. B.; Rev. G. N. S.; S. B. P.; Rana; J. M. C.; Dora; S. B.; J. G. F., and W. S.

The Editors would be glad to receive from friends in the country, or in large provincial towns, accounts of their schools, similar to those which have appeared in the series of papers—"Our Sunday Schools." **These must (in confidence) be authenticated, as real and not fictitious** coloured descriptions are necessary where records of actual proceedings are sought for.

Any contributions for the next Number should be sent to the Editors not later than the end of November.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

SUNDAY SCHOOL

QUARTERLY

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PREFACE.

ANOTHER year of our Editorial work now comes to its close, requiring a few words of friendly greeting to our Readers. Our Magazine has pursued its usual course, and has, we trust, been welcome, as before, to many whose active sympathies are enlisted in Sunday School work. A wider circle of Readers would be a source of encouragement and of strength to us; but we feel that, on the whole, we have more ground for thankfulness than for complaint.

Of the undiminished need of Scriptural Education for the poor we surely need say but little. Amidst all the strife that rages round the Truth, two facts are beyond all denial; the first, that Man is fallen—the second, that the Gospel is the very plan, and the only one, that can restore him. No condemnation can be too severe for him who seeks to weaken

the Faith that has given peace in Life and Death to myriads, without having anything to offer in its stead.

Be it ours, then, to throw fresh energy into our work as Teachers, redeeming the time the more earnestly because the days are (in that respect) evil. And we especially, as Editors, hope, by God's blessing, to make our Magazine still more thoroughly and pointedly a Teacher's companion and counsellor.

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Church of England

SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY

MAGAZINE.

1ST JANUARY, 1863.

The Teacher in his Closet.

HANDFUL OF CORN FROM OLD FIELDS.

ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF TIME.

OBSERVE a method in the distribution of your time. Every hour will then know its proper employment, and no time will be lost. Idleness will be shut out at every avenue, and with her, that numerous body of vices that make up her train.

Bishop Horne.

IN all the actions which a man performs, some part of his life passes. We die while doing that for which alone our sliding life was granted. Nay, though we do nothing, time keeps his constant pace, and flies as fast in idleness as in employment. Whether we play or labour or sleep or dance or study, the sun posts on, and the sand runs. An hour of vice is as long as an hour of virtue. But the difference between good and bad actions is infinite. Good actions though they diminish our time here as well as bad actions, yet they lay up for us a happiness in eternity; and will recompense what they take away, by a plentiful return at last.

Feltham.

The hours of a wise man are lengthened by his ideas, as those of a fool are by his passions. The time of the one is long, because he does not know what to do with it: so is that of the other, because he distinguishes every moment of it with useful or amusing thoughts; or, in other words, because the one is always wishing it away, and the other always enjoying it.

Addison.

To show us the worth of time, God, most liberal of all other things, is exceedingly frugal in the dispensing of *that:* for He never gives us two moments together, nor grants us a second till He has withdrawn the first, still keeping the third in His own hands, so that we are in a perfect uncertainty whether we shall have it or not. The true manner for preparing for the last moment is, to spend all the others well, and ever to expect *that.*

Fenelon.

Lost wealth may be restored by industry,—the wreck of health regained by temperance—forgotten knowledge restored by study—alienated friendship smoothed into forgetfulness—even forfeited reputation won by penitence and virtue. But who ever looked upon his vanished hours—recalled his slighted years—stamped them with wisdom—or effaced from Heaven's record the fearful blot of wasted time?

Mrs. Sigourney.

Pause not to dream of the future before us,
Pause not to weep the wild cares that come o'er us,
Hark how Creation's deep musical chorus,
Unintermitting, goes up into Heaven!
Never the ocean-wave falters in flowing,
Never the little seed stops in its growing,
More and more richly, the rose-heart keeps glowing,
Till from its nourishing stem it is riven.

"Labour is worship," the robin is singing,
"Labour is worship," the wild bee is ringing;
Listen! that eloquent whisper, up-springing,
Speaks to thy soul from out nature's heart.
From the dark cloud, flows the life-giving shower,
From the rough sod comes the soft-breathing flower,
From the small insect the rich coral bower:
Only man, in the plan, ever shrinks from his part.

Labour is life! 'Tis the still water faileth;
Idleness ever despaireth, bewaileth;
Keep the watch wound; for the dark rust assaileth,
Flowers droop and die, in the stillness of noon.

Labour is glory! the flying cloud lightens;
Only the waving wing changes and brightens;
Idle hearts only, the dark future frightens;
Play the sweet keys, would'st thou keep them in tune.

Labour is rest—from the sorrows that greet us;
Rest from all petty vexations that meet us;
Rest from sin-promptings, that ever entreat us,
Rest from world-syrens, that lure us to ill.
Work, and pure slumbers shall wait on thy pillow;
Work, thou shall ride over care's coming billow;
Lie not down wearied 'neath woe's weeping willow,
Work with a stout heart and resolute will.

Mrs. Frances Osgood.

How presumptuously hast thou transgressed the express commandments of thy God! How hast thou dashed thyself against His judgments! How hath thy undeserving hand usurped thy diet, and thou wearest on thy back the wages of thy painful soul! Art thou not condemned to rags, to famine, by Him whose law commanded thee to labour? And yet thou pamperest up thy sides with stolen food, and yet thou deckest thy wanton body with unearned ornaments; whilst they that spend their daily strength in their commanded callings, want bread to feed and rags to clothe them. Thou art no young raven, my soul—no lily! Where ability to labour is, there Providence meets action and crowns it; He that forbids to cark for to-morrow, denies bread to the idleness of to-day. Consider, O my soul, thy own delinquency, and let employment make thee capable of thy God's protection. The bird that *sits* is a fair mark for the fowler; while they that *use the wing* escape the danger. Follow thy calling, and Heaven will follow thee with His blessing. What thou hast formerly omitted, present repentance may redeem; and what judgments God hath threatened, early petitions may avert.

Quarles. 1644.

Sir Horace Vere, on being asked by the Marquis Spinola, the cause of his brother's death, is said to have replied, "He died, Sir, of having nothing to do." "Alas!" said the Marquis, "that is enough to kill any general of us all."

Up and to work! Eternity
Must reap the harvest Time hath sown.

Delta.

The more we accomplish, the more we have to accomplish. All things are full of labour, and therefore the more we acquire, the more we care, and the more we toil to secure our acquisitions. Good men

can never retire from their works of benevolence. Their fortune is never made: I never heard of an apostle, prophet, or public benefactor, retiring from their respective fields of labour; Moses, and Paul, and Peter, died with their harness on. So did Luther, and Calvin, and Wesley, and a thousand others, as deserving though not so well known to fame. We are inured to labour. It is first a duty; it is now a pleasure.

A. Campbell.

The idle man is the most barren of all earthly subjects. There is no creature that hath life, but is busied in some action for the benefit of the world. The fire, how restless in its quick and catching flame! In the air what changes! and how fluctuating are the ocean's waves! Nor is the teeming earth weary after so many thousand years' production. These things may well raise a blush on the cheek of the indolent man, and certainly teach him a striking lesson for his improvement.

It is action that keeps the soul both sweet and sound, while lying still does rot it. Augustine imputes Esau's loss of the blessing, partly to his slothfulness in rather receiving meat, than seeking after it. When one boasted of the blessings of the Roman State, and that since Carthage was razed, and Greece subdued, it might now be happy, as having nothing to fear, says the best Scipio, "We now are most in danger, for while we want business, and have no foe to awe us, we are ready to drown in the mud of vice and slothfulness."

How bright does the soul grow with use! Believe it, industry is never wholly unfruitful. If it bring not joy with the incoming profit it will, at all events, keep mischief away from thee. Fortune, it was said of old, should not be prayed to, but with hands in motion. How unworthy was that man, who never did aught but lived and died!

Owen Feltham.

Alas! I have walked through life
Too heedless where I trod;
Nay, helping to trample my fellow worm,
And fill the burial sod,—
Forgetting that even the sparrow falls,
Not unmarked of God.

I drank the richest draughts,
And ate whatever is good,—
Fish and flesh, and fowl and fruit,
Supplied my hungry mood;
But I never remembered the wretched ones,
That starve for want of food.

I drest as the noble dress,
In cloth of silver and gold,
With silk and satin and costly furs,
In many an ample fold;
But I never remembered the naked limbs,
That froze with winter's cold.

The wounds I might have healed,
The human sorrow and smart;
And yet it never was in my soul,
To play so ill a part;
But evil is wrought by want of thought,
As well as want of heart.

Hood.

Excellence is providentially placed beyond the reach of indolence, that success may be the reward of industry, and that idleness may be punished with obscurity and disgrace.

Cowper.

When we see the rapid motions of insects at evening, we exclaim, "How happy they must be!" So inseparably are happiness and activity connected in our minds.

Thoughts in the Cloister and in the Crowd.

Sloth makes all things difficult, but industry all easy: and he that riseth late must trot all day, and shall scarce overtake his business at night, while laziness travels so slowly that poverty soon overtakes him.

From "Laconics."

Idleness is the dead sea, which swallows all virtues, and is the self-made sepulchre of a living man.

Johnson.

Time with all its celerity, moves slowly on to him, whose whole employment is to watch its flight.

Bacon.

THE VALUE OF PRAYER.

The only sure way of experiencing either earthly comfort here, or heavenly blessings hereafter, is by conforming with the Apostle's advice to "pray without ceasing." And surely nothing ought to be more simple and easy than this! How natural it is that we, who are in want of so many things, should ask for them, especially with

the assurance that what we ask for will be given to us! How natural it is that we, who have lost so much, aye, everything which ought to be of value to us, should seek to regain it, especially when Christ himself tells us, that what we seek we shall find! How natural it is that we who are by nature shut out from the marriage supper, who have excluded ourselves from communion with God, and who may be debarred—perhaps for ever—from those Divine mansions which have been prepared for us, how natural it is that we should knock, when the Bridegroom himself is at the door, and has said, "By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture!" How natural it is that we should make use of prayer, which is the first means God has appointed by which we can obtain His grace, and the help of His Holy Spirit! It is the only means by which we can expect God to give us any of His gifts—the first act by which we connect ourselves with Him; it is the chief obstacle our mortal enemy has to contend with,

> "For Satan trembles when he sees,
> The weakest sinner on his knees."

It is the only shield which can ward off any of the numberless and deceitful temptations by which he surrounds us on every side. When we pray, then are we in sweet communion with God, then are we near Him, and under His special protection; then the devil dares not to approach us—his darts and arrows, ever pointed and aimed at us, return into their quiver; then are we chiefly defended by God's mighty aid, and comforted by His Holy Spirit—then, and then only are dangers far from us, and adversities few in number! St Paul knew this; he knew the weakness and corruption of human nature; he knew that all stand in need of such numberless blessings, that all have such daily and hourly wants; he knew, moreover, by whom alone these wants could be supplied, and that by prayer and supplication only; so that he earnestly urges those to whom he is writing to pray, and not only this, "but to pray without ceasing." So it is now. We cannot rightly fulfil the duties of the day, whether we have to teach or to learn, without at the beginning of it praying to God for His grace. And so when we read the Bible, we are taught to offer up the applicable collect for the Second Sunday in Advent. And children ought to pray as earnestly, in their simple manner, as grown-up persons. Sunday is certainly a day especially set apart for prayer, but every day of our lives we should try to cultivate the spirit of prayer.

I. And first, our prayers must be *frequent*. We need not be always praying, always on our knees, for this would indeed be but unprofitable work; we should have no time for doing those things which are required of us, to show that our prayers and repentance

are sincere; but we must on no account omit either public, family, or private prayer, whenever we have the opportunity of making use of them. We must resort to God's house as often as public service is celebrated, unless we can feel with most perfect satisfaction that more important duties are occupying our time; and we *shall not find* other duties to attend to on the Sabbath, which will prevent us from worshipping God in His sanctuary, and praising His holy name. We must not omit assembling together the members of our household, before the labours of the day begin, and when the night cometh "when no man can work," and to take this opportunity of thanking God for all his mercies vouchsafed to ourselves and others, and to offer up earnest petitions to Him for a continuance of them. Much less must we omit private prayer in our closets morning and evening; but let us not confine ourselves to these stated times; but let us, as good Christians, whenever we are in any trouble or affliction ask comfort from God—say a few words within ourselves, even amidst our daily tasks, without retiring in secrecy—and God will not fail to hear us. We shall find the load that is pressing us down, if not removed, yet greatly lightened. If we do but pour out our heart to God, and ask but for one drop of His comforting grace, we shall no more overwhelm our fellow-creatures with our complaints, and add sorrow to those, who have already more than they can bear; instead of being tossed about like a ship in the midst of the ocean, and carried whither the wind and the waves will, we shall, by one word from our Saviour, be at perfect rest, and shall be in sight of the comforting and welcome shore, whithersoever we go. And let us not deceive ourselves, and think that we can excuse ourselves from either public, family, or private prayer, by the consideration that we are fulfilling one or two of them. They do not consist of one or two duties, but of three, and we cannot make amends for neglecting one duty by the consideration that we are fulfilling another. All are separate duties, and must be separately performed.

II. Our prayers must be *earnest*,—not those empty forms with which so many dishonour God night and morning, but sincere and zealous supplications, which, like the smoke of a holy sacrifice, will ascend up to heaven, and be accepted by our Almighty Father, who loves to hear His children when they call upon Him. Our prayers need not be long to be *earnest*. Remember how the poor publican, in our Lord's parable, was heard, though he said no more than "God be merciful to me, a sinner." And have we not our Saviour's solemn assurance that this man went down to his house justified rather than the Pharisee, who proud and trusting for salvation through his own works, prayed and thanked God that he was different from other men, that he was more charitable, more self-denying, more devout; but

who, with all like-minded, were to receive their reward in this world, instead of the next, and be honoured by men rather than by God. How many of us, I fear, too often follow his example! How far are we from praying in that beseeching, earnest manner, when we might be said even to wrestle with God, and when, without doubt, we should come off victorious! How far are we from acknowledging that our whole hope for mercy is on God and on our Saviour! How far are we from praying with that zeal and frequency which we ought to do! Too many of us, I fear, make prayer but a form—we draw near to God with our lips, but our heart is far from Him. We pray, perhaps, but morning and evening, and that only for a few minutes, when we hesitate not to give the whole day either to our business or to our pleasure! We are glad when our *moments* of prayer are ended, and our *hours* of pleasure are begun. What a mockery! What a grievous sin must this be!

III. Again, our prayers must be humble. The sin of the Pharisee was *pride*, and the secret of the Publican's acceptance was *humility*. And I would have all to feel how absolutely necessary it is that they *should* pray to God meekly and humbly on their bended knees. They must feel their own need of God's assisting grace, and they will then be humble indeed. We must pray acknowledging the greatness and majesty of Him, whom we are addressing, as One who is able to grant all that we ask, and much more, and in whose hands is the ordering of all things. We must fall low on our knees before His footstool, or else we shall not be heard. If we were asking a favour of any earthly prince, we should not sit, or be careless and indifferent, for if we did, we might be sure our request would not be granted to us. How much less ought we to do so, when we are praying to a Heavenly King—our Almighty Father—and when the subject is our eternal salvation; and we may be sure that our petitions will not be granted—that we shall not even have a hearing given to us—unless we thus approach the throne of grace in all humility. We must be *humble*, also, in the requests which we make to God—we must not ask for honour, pomp, or wealth. If God see any of these things needful for us, He will give them to us; but we must pray for a clean heart and a contrite spirit—for our eternal happiness—for the welfare of our own souls, and of those of others—for God's strength that we may resist all temptations, and please Him; that our sins may be forgiven, that we ourselves, our friends, and our enemies (who should always be remembered in our prayers), may turn from dead works to serve the living and true God, and that in the great day of retribution, we may be saved amongst the remnant of the true Israel. Solomon's prayer was not for this world's goods, but for wisdom; wisdom whereby he might do good

in his generation, and to all succeeding ages, and by which God might be glorified and his name magnified. So let us do, remembering what Job says, "The *fear* of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding."

IV. Our prayers and supplications must also be offered with thanksgiving. Paul does not only say 'pray without ceasing," but he adds also, "In everything giving thanks" What have we that we have not received? Thanksgiving should always be connected with prayer—we always have something which we ought to be thankful for, no matter what may be the burden of our wants, or the special subject of our petitions. Our thanksgivings must be offered to God as the outpouring of a grateful and obedient heart, grateful for the numberless blessings and mercies which we have already received, and entreating Him that His boundless mercy may yet be extended to us a little longer, until, by His grace, our hearts are softened, and we feel in some degree, the "length, and breadth, and heighth, of the love of God, which passeth knowledge." We must pray in an earnest and serious manner, and so shall the blessings and mercies which we ask for, be showered upon us. God will not withhold His hand, but will give us more than we ask for, and much more than we deserve, so that we shall have additional reason for offering, not only renewed *prayers*, but renewed *praises*. And believe me, the one is as needful as the other. *Prayer* and *praise* go well together. Our Church has wisely ordered it that her services should begin with humble confessions, and then go on to praise. Those who are too late for the first, cannot justly join in the second. If we offer not the one for past benefits, the other will be ineffectual for future ones. David says, "I will give thanks unto thee with my whole heart; secretly, and among the congregation, will I sing praise unto thee." Our happiness then will not be confined to this world. Our prayers and supplications may cease, for the occasion will be wanting; but our praises and thanksgiving never will—for we shall join in the angelic throng "in singing blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever."

V. And above everything else, let us remember through whom we must offer our prayers to God. We must pray to Him through Jesus Christ, not trusting in our own merits, but in the righteousness of Christ. Our Saviour says, "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, He will give it you." And "no man cometh unto the Father but by me." We must not refuse, then, to approach God in the way which He has appointed. If we do not this, we cannot expect that He will hear us; but if we obey God, and pray to Him through His Son, we *may* expect, through the unfailing promise of our Saviour,

that our prayers will be heard and answered. He intercedeth for us at the right hand of God, and will present our petitions to the throne of grace cleansed from all their imperfections, and will make them meet to be accepted by our Heavenly Father.

Thus, praying as we ought, our prayers cannot fail of being effectual. See how earnestly and frequently, and by this means effectually, all good men have prayed before us, setting us an example which we should all follow. It was by *prayer* that Moses so often delivered the children of Israel from the wrath of God, which they had so justly incurred. David was always *praying* to and *praising* God; and his sins, though many, were forgiven him. How were Elijah and Elisha able to do their marvellous deeds, but by praying night and day? By *prayer*, Hezekiah was saved from the army of the Assyrians, and had his life prolonged fifteen years—the sun being turned backward ten degrees, as a sign that God would do that wonderful thing which He had promised. Daniel prayed three times a day, and was protected from all the dangers of the court of Babylon, and remained uninjured in the den of lions. And who prayed so earnestly and frequently as our Saviour Himself did, who continued all night in prayer to God? How much more then have we, who are so weak and sinful, need of earnest and frequent prayer!

Thus all things can be obtained by prayer—without it, nothing. You see how many have had their prayers answered by God, and think you that He will refuse to hear us if we also pray to Him? His ears are ever open to receive the prayers of His servants, and we know not how far we may be the instruments, under God, of saving ourselves and fellow-creatures from everlasting doom and destruction, for we are told that the "effectual, fervent, prayer of a righteous man, availeth much."

E. F.

"O LORD, MY STRENGTH."

A THOUGHT FOR THE NEW YEAR.

"I have no help but Thine; nor do I need
Another arm save Thine to lean upon;
It is enough, my Lord, enough, indeed;
My strength is in Thy might, Thy might alone.

"I have no wisdom, save in Him who is
My wisdom and my teacher, both in one;
No wisdom can I lack while Thou art wise,
No teaching do I crave, save Thine alone.

"Mine is the sin, but Thine the righteousness;
Mine is the guilt, but Thine the cleansing blood;
Here is my robe, my refuge, and my peace;
Thy blood, Thy righteousness, O Lord, my God!"

Bonar.

"O! LORD, MY STRENGTH AND MY REDEEMER." PS. XIX. 14.

WHAT a staff is here on which to lean; one of which it never shall be said, "How is the strong staff broken!" I need not hesitate to look either my weakness or my sinfulness in the face, while I can at the same time look up to the "Eternity of Israel," and say, "*my Strength;*" to "God manifest in the flesh," and say, "*my Redeemer.*"

"O LORD, my strength:" it is not God strengthens me, though this is most true; but I may be utterly weak, I may be left so, permitted to realize it as I have never done before; yet then it is that God is my strength. It may be weakness of *heart*, the utter failing of the waters of earth's love of which we have been wont to drink, either by their removal, or by renewed experience of their unsatisfying nature. But God is the strength of our hearts; the stay for their deep affections; the rest for their fathomless yearnings; and we shall neither grow cold nor selfish as long as we say, "O Lord, my strength" of heart.

There is also the weakness of the *knees;* the failing of bodily power, the decay of natural energy, the trembling sensation of a weight too heavy to bear. It may not please God to strengthen us so that the feeling of weakness and weariness shall pass away, but He will be our strength to uphold, to support, to cheer. "His right hand under our heads," while "His left hand embraces us;" "underneath us the everlasting arms;"—if the feeble knees do not grow strong, what is far better will be bestowed, the deeper realization of this blessed truth, "O Lord, my Strength."

But there are weak *hands* also. The work given us to do seems too great for us; its issues are so momentous, its responsibilities so great, our hands hang down, our efforts grow languid. The very vastness of the calls made upon us prostrates our energies. It is a cheering assurance that it is in God's "hands to *give* strength," yet there are times when He would have us learn, not by feeling strengthened, but by utter emptiness, that the work is all His own; and then it is that we learn out these words, "O Lord, my Strength."

Nor is the Lord Jehovah my *strength* alone, He is also "my *Redeemer*." I was a slave; He paid my ransom price, and has a right to say, "I have redeemed thee, thou art mine." I had sold myself for nought, and as far as I am myself concerned, am redeemed without money, but the costly price of my freedom was the blood of "Immanuel, God with us."

"Jehovah, *my Redeemer*;" then the satisfaction is perfect, the salvation everlasting, the sin made an end of. Let justice point to a holy law, the "accuser of the brethren" bring up the dark catalogue of crime, conscience tremble before the "judge of all the earth;"—let but my faith appropriate the eternal redemption, the finished work, nay, let it lay hold of the Redeemer Himself, saying, "I am Thine, save me;" and justice herself will acknowledge, "He hath magnified the law, and made it honorable;" the lawful captive shall be delivered from the adversary's hand; and conscience, purged from dead works by the Redeemer's blood shall henceforth serve the living God.

"O Lord, my *Strength*," what shall I fear? "O Lord my *Redeemer*," "Who is He that shall condemn me?" "O Lord, my Strength," "I will trust and not be afraid;"—"O Lord, my Redeemer," "I will give thanks unto Thee for ever." "Jehovah, my Strength," there shall no evil happen to me; "Jehovah, my Redeemer," I shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. "Jehovah, my Strength," shall also be my song; "Jehovah, my Redeemer," shall be my glory.

The preciousness of the words lies in their personality, the comfort lies in the pronouns. It were small consolation that the Lord were Strength, if He were not "*my* Strength," or a Redeemer, unless He were *mine*. And if God teaches us individually to say "*my* Strength and *my* Redeemer," then surely we are bound to do what in us lies to strengthen the weak hands, the feeble knees, the failing hearts, of others; to be ever giving out the Bride's invitation, "Come," with the assurance that "His Glory will be great in their salvation;" that He is Strength only because we are weak, the Redeemer because we are lost; and to rejoice with a measure of Christ's own joy, when not from our hearts and lips alone, but from the hearts and lips of others also, the glad song of appropriating faith and love may go up as incense, sweet and fragrant, "O LORD, my Strength, and my Redeemer."

"Now to Him that is of power to stablish,.....the only wise God our Saviour, be glory for ever." Amen.

Dora.

"GO, LABOUR ON."

Go, labour on; spend, and be spent,—
Thy joy to do the Father's will;
It is the way the Master went;
Should not the servant tread it still?

Go, labour on; 'tis not for nought;
Thy earthly loss is heavenly gain;
Men heed thee, love thee, praise thee not;
The Master praises;—What are men?

Go, labour on; your hands are weak,
Your knees are faint, your souls cast down;
Yet falter not; the prize you seek
Is near,—a kingdom and a crown.

Go, labour on while it is day;
The world's dark night is hastening on;
Speed, speed thy work, cast sloth away;
It is not thus that souls are won.

Men die in darkness at your side,
Without a hope to cheer the tomb;
Take up the torch, and wave it wide,
The torch that lights time's thickest gloom.

Toil on, faint not, keep watch and pray;
Be wise, the erring soul to win;
Go forth into the world's highway,
Compel the wanderer to come in.

Toil on, and in thy toil rejoice;
For toil comes rest, for exile, home;
Soon shalt thou hear the Bridegroom's voice,
The midnight cry, "Behold, I come!"

H. Bonar.

REVERENCE FOR GOD'S HOUSE.

Our familiarity with Old Testament history will have brought vividly before us the peculiar reverence with which the Jews were taught to regard the Temple, as the place where God's honour dwelt, where some visible manifestation of His presence was promised, where His blessing was to be sought, and His worship celebrated from generation to generation. We know, too, how dear to the heart of

David were the services of the sanctuary, and how often he has recorded in the Psalms his thankfulness and joy in being permitted to take part in them;—"Lord I have loved the habitation of thine house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth." "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! my soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord." "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house! they will be still praising Thee; for a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of the wicked." "Holiness becometh thy house, O Lord for ever" (Ps. xxvi., lxxxiv., xciii.)

Surely, now the time has come predicted by our Lord, when neither at Jerusalem nor on Gerizim only, but throughout the world, men should be permitted everywhere to worship the Father, in spirit and in truth, a kindred feeling should still be preserved for every house of prayer:—for now, as in old time, "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him;" and a not less reverential spirit than that enjoined for those who were worshippers in the first temple, should be cherished by those who have "boldness to enter the holiest of all, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say His flesh;" and who "having a High Priest over the house of God, may now draw near, with a true heart and full assurance of faith," and are exhorted in consequence not to forsake the assembling of themselves together (Heb. x.), seeing that they have the promise of our Lord to encourage them, that "when two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 20.)

This thought alone is sufficient to solemnise us, for "The Lord is in His holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him" (Heb. ii. 20). Nor, if we recollected in whose immediate presence we assemble, should we neglect the warning of the preacher,—"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God" (Eccles. v. 1, 2.) To feel that we are met together to glorify the Maker of the universe, to speak face to face spiritually with the Eternal Majesty of heaven, may well strike us with a holy awe, akin to that of Jacob,—"How dreadful is this place! this is none other than the house of God and this"—may be to me—"the gate of heaven."

The preparation of the heart is never so much needed as in the public services of the Church; for those who know themselves, however superficially, are but too well aware that the great hindrances to effectual and profitable worship of every description are

formality—the substitution of the shadow for the substance—of the letter for the spirit—voluntarily drawing near to God with our lips, when our hearts are far from Him. We feel and admit that it is the Spirit of God alone who can keep us in the real spirit of prayer; else will our thoughts wander to the recalling of events of trivial moment in the past, or to speculations on what will probably happen in the future. How often, alas! are we, in thought and spirit, *out* of Church, when our bodies are *present* there—how often are we in the world when apparently in the sanctuary, and our hearts far from God while we are kneeling before Him in the great congregation, repeating with our lips the words of prayer and praise!

Good George Herbert, than whom none knew better the proneness of the spirit to wander from Divine service, and none strived so much to keep his heart with all diligence—has, in some of his quaint rhymes, well advised us to keep a guard over such wanderings:—

"When once thy foot enters the Church, be bare.
God is more there than thou; for thou art there
Only by His permission. Then, beware,
And make thyself all reverence and fear . . .

In time of service seal up both thine eyes,
And send them to thy heart, that, spying sin,
They may weep out the stains by them did rise;
Those doors being shut, all by the ear comes in.
Who marks in Church-time others' symmetry
Makes all their beauty his deformity.

Let vain or busy thoughts have there no part;
Bring not thy plough, thy plots, thy pleasures thither:
Christ purged His temple—so must thou thy heart.
All worldly thoughts are but thieves met together
To cozen thee. Look to thy actions well,
For churches either are our heaven or hell."

While we do well to be thus watchful, on the one hand, against taking no real pleasure in the public services of the Church, or growing weary of the hours we thus spend, or allowing our minds to wander from the purpose for which we repair to the house of the Lord—it is also good for us to look at the brighter side of the picture, and to recall the happy memories of well-spent Sabbath hours. As of old the Psalmist was "glad when they said unto him, Let us go into the house of the Lord," so we, too, should be able to speak of doing the same, under the better covenant, "with the voice of joy and praise." Many are the sweet experiences of the past, by which we have all learnt to feel that it is good for us to repair habitually to the sanctuary of God—for thus have we been strength-

ened to perform the duties of life, armed to meet its vicissitudes, fortified to endure its trials, admonished to be on our guard so as to be able to resist its temptations, instructed alike how to enjoy its pleasures and to impart its benefits, and so to make our weeks happy by keeping our Sabbaths holy. A secret sense of serene and holy pleasure is diffused over the mind seeking to glorify God, as it enters the precincts of the place consecrated as the house of prayer—distinguished from other places by outward signs of reverence for the Great Being who inhabits no temple made with hands but filleth the universe eternally with His presence. We feel with delight that we are on holy ground, and a still small voice within, as we draw near to "worship God in the beauty of holiness," answers, in the words of the Apostle, at the sight of the excellent glory of our Redeemer, "It is good for us to be here." In the place where prayer is wont to be made, there is a mystic ladder whereby, though we see it not, the angels ascend and descend upon all who worship in spirit and in truth; and every Church where men hold communion with their Saviour, as a man converses with his friend, is not only a house of God, but "the gate of heaven."

If thus, as individuals, we are able to realise not only the solemn feelings which the immediate presence of God is calculated to inspire, but also the privileges which are afforded to us in the public services of the Church, ought we not to be anxious as Sunday school teachers to implant similar feelings of reverence and delight in those whom we are the means of leading to the house of prayer? That something more should be done in this matter, few Sunday school teachers will deny, who have had "the charge" of the children of our schools, during the periods of service, or who have watched their conduct and employments during the hours allotted to public worship. We are told, and perhaps truly, that our service, simple as it is in its language, varied as is its character, and inviting as it does all present to take a part in it—is yet not such as very young or but little instructed children can take interest in. But are we sure that something might not be done to remove the restless indifference with which it is evidently regarded by some, and the noisy irreverence with which it is responded to by others? There seems to be an absence, in a large proportion of the children, of all that awe which a child, realising the thought of God's nearer presence, would instinctively feel—a want of that solemnity which ought to fill every breast as it bows before its God—a disregard of the fact that the words of prayer and praise are actually spoken *to* the Most High, and that the Holy Scriptures are *His* voice speaking to us. Can we not do something to kindle these feelings, without generating any morbid terror, or taking from the real delight which

even a child may derive from converse with its Heavenly Father through Him who bid the little children to His presence, and blessed them?

And again: the outward demeanour of our Sunday scholars in church is not such as we should wish. Might we not lead our young friends to amend this defect by telling them of the example of God's servants of old in this respect, or by pressing upon them such texts as those we have already quoted, and especially the words of Habakkuk, "The Lord is in His holy temple: let all the earth *keep silence* before Him." Cannot something be done, too, as to the *posture* of our children in prayer? In many of the seats appropriated to their use in church, they are unhappily so crowded together, that it is difficult for them to kneel even during the confession of sin and the solemn petitions of the Litany. Yet what other position is fitting for those conscious of the infinite perfection of the Majesty on High, of the degradation of their own nature, and of their need of mercy and of grace? And does not the fact of their being allowed to sit during prayers encourage the levity of demeanour we are so anxious to remove? Forced positions of reverence are too prone to degenerate into form and hypocrisy to be urged for general adoption; but the practice which prevails in many churches of the school children keeping their eyes closed, and their hands folded during the prayers, suggests unconsciously, even to the wayward, that they are supposed to be engaged in a solemn exercise, and at least prevents the various interruptions which greater laxity in this respect admits. It is a terrible thought, which has been often forced upon us, as we have watched the listless and restless little ones in the house of prayer, that perhaps their constrained presence at a service in which they felt no delight during their childhood, might, unless God's grace over-ruled their natural aversion, afterwards estrange them altogether from habitual attendance at the house of prayer.

Surely it would well repay us for any efforts we may make to avert such a result, if, by God's blessing, we could so inspire them with reverence for the house of prayer, so enlist their sympathies in the admirable services of our Church, so awaken their attention to the lessons of Scripture read, and the message of the Gospel preached, as to lead them, one and all, to glorify God in their bodies and in their spirits on earth, and thus secure the earnest of the hope, dear to every teacher's heart, that we may, one and all, sing together the praises of God, and of our Saviour, in the temple of the Lamb, before whose bright and invisible presence is the fulness of joy, for evermore.

M. S.

HOW A CHILD CAN HONOUR GOD.

THIS lesson a teacher was engaged one Sunday afternoon in teaching her class, which was composed of girls, whose ages varied from eleven to fourteen years. The children were very attentive, while she talked of the difficulties which lie in the way of honouring God; she told them how, sometimes, ungodly or thoughtless parents would send their children to shops on Sundays; and permit or order them to perform other duties on that sacred day, which could as well, with a little management, have been attended to on a week-day: but, with reference to this obstacle, she reminded them of the Saviour's words, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." She spoke of other hindrances, such as jeering companions, evil examples, suggestions of the devil, and, lastly, of the constant disinclination to do right, which is the fallen nature of our own corrupt hearts. After thus opening out to them the difficulties in their path, Miss W—— reminded the children that earnest, humble prayer was the unfailing means of obtaining grace to overcome them all. She then made them repeat the hymn

"I'm not ashamed to own the Lord," &c.

and, reminding them of the declaration of Jehovah,—"Them that honour Me I will honour," she dismissed them.

We will follow some of these children to their homes. Annie G—— no sooner reached hers, than her mother exclaimed, "That's right, Annie girl, glad you're back; now run to the corner shop and get a half-a-pound of dips, and look sharp, for there isn't a candle in the house." Annie answered timidly, "Mother, teacher told us, to-day, how wrong it was to buy on Sundays; can't we manage without to-night? Mrs. Forbes would lend us one."—"Nonsense, child, do as I bid you; come, be off at once; mind, no loitering, or I'll know the reason why." Annie was thoroughly cowed, and went on the errand; fearing more the anger of her mother than the wrath of an offended God.

We will now peep into another cottage, where a family is assembled round the tea table; rather a spoilt set of children, as the dissatisfied spirit prevailing among them testifies. Sally has not quite so much milk in her tea as Jack; and teases, until her silly mother gives her more, with an accompanying slap; and then Jack fancies she has received more than *he* had; so a slight wrangle ensues, until the father stops it, by asking Sally what her lesson at the Sunday school had been about. "Honouring God, father," is the reply, "and you needn't expect me to get you any more tobacco on Sundays, for I'm not going to do it, nor yet any errands for mother." A sound

box on the ears is the only notice this pert speech obtains from the father, while the other indignantly exclaims, "Well I'm sure! if you're taught to speak in *that* way to your parents, I think you'd best keep away from the Sunday School." Sally whimpers and sulks for the rest of the evening; she tries to deceive herself into the belief that she meant to honour God, but the secret motive actuating the little girl really was her dominant love of defying her parents.

From the sad thoughts this sketch must have awakened, let me lead you, patient reader, to another scene. Yon tall girl, looking so much older than her companions, is scarcely fourteen, and considered rather backward for her age; indeed her anxious teacher can never tell how far a lesson has been understood by her, for she seldom gives signs of being alive to what is passing, and answers have to be literally dragged from her. A stranger would set her down as thoroughly stupid, but the teacher knows more of her children than to judge so hastily; she is well aware that poor Hannah has been working hard all the week, generally up to a late hour on Saturday night; that she has to walk nearly a mile to the school; that her recent rapid growth tells upon her strength; and that home fare is not always of the most nourishing description; therefore Miss W—— is not surprised to find Hannah has so little energy left for the Sunday School; her sole hope is that Hannah may, each time, carry away good seed, though it should be so secretly nurtured in her heart, that none but God may see it there, and watch its growth.

Hannah has now reached home; her brothers and sisters are already at tea with their widowed mother, but our young friend does not join them. "I'll be back in a minute, mother dear," she replies, to a kind suggestion that her shawl and bonnet should be thrown aside down stairs; and she runs up to the little bed-room, shared with three sisters, and, sinking on her knees, utters earnest words to the mighty God whom, she has been taught, even a feeble child may honour. Soon we see her occupying the warmest seat at the small table, reserved for "their Hannah" by the loving younger ones, and her pleasant but quiet manner adds to the happy feeling which reigns in widow Thompson's dwelling.

The following Sunday Hannah's mother directs her to clean out the "living room" before going to school, and adds, "You will just have time to polish up the front window too, if you look sharp, while I put away the breakfast things, and get the children tidy for School." "Mother dear, if you will let me help you with the children, I will get up an hour earlier *to-morrow*, to do the room and front window." "An hour earlier, child! why, what can you mean? as if five o'clock was not early enough already."—"Ain't you well?" continued she anxiously, "Sure, you look thin as ever, come tell me

what's wrong with you, Hannah." But Hannah hesitates, and at last, in a modest tone, replies, "Mother, you never go to shops on Sundays, nor send us, because you say it isn't right; last Sunday, teacher told us it was just as wrong to do *any* kind of work on the Sabbath day that we can possibly do on a week-day, because God has given us the day of rest to spend in better ways, and commands us to keep it holy." Mrs. Thompson had listened patiently while her daughter, with bowed head, spoke scarcely above a whisper; but now, drawing her fondly to her, she murmurs in a half-choked voice, "Your mother will never love you less, Hannah, for your keeping of God's laws; but you wouldn't know much about them if it weren't for that blessed Sunday school—I ought to ha' known better than to bid you do what's wrong."

Four o'clock on Monday morning finds Hannah, broom in hand, but with a light heart; her beaming face displays the inward happiness which right-doing never fails to bring. She has honoured God, on His appointed day of rest; and He has immediately fulfilled the divine promise, by making her the honoured instrument of leading her own mother to discontinue a wrong practice; and we know a yet richer reward is yet in store, for the day will surely come when Jesus shall honour His faithful servant, in His Father's presence, before the hosts of heaven.

I cannot refrain from returning to follow yet another of that little class from the school. Mary is a merry looking child, and generally considered rather thoughtless. She is, however, unusually subdued to-day, her teacher has evidently touched a right chord in her young heart. "How grave Molly looks!" is brother Bob's remark, as she enters the cottage door; which he follows up by a series of antics, to provoke a laugh, and is not long in succeeding; still, every now and then, Mary again relapses into a mood so unwontedly quiet, that Sarah asks her what the matter is; on which she tries to brisk up and join in the general chatter. At length bedtime arrives, and off they all go to their several little rooms; Sarah and Mary, have one between them; Bob and little Dick occupy another not far off. Sarah is soon absorbed in surveying her new frock, worn for the first time to-day; she is anxious to see how it looks by candle-light, and turns and twists about, before the little looking glass, in the vain endeavour to take in every part. But what is Mary about? Sarah soon stops her pleasant occupation, to find out; then, quick as thought, she quits the room; in another moment derisive shouts of laughter cause poor Mary to shake from head to foot, and bring the distracted mother up-stairs, just in time to see a pillow thrown at her kneeling child. She asks what Bob means by such conduct, and he surlily announces that "they are

none of them going to allow Mary to make a goose of herself, by pretending to be so very sanctified, and all that rubbish, so she needn't try it on." Mary, who has now risen, gently pleads that, until to-night, she had always said her prayers in bed, but that this afternoon, her teacher had told them they dishonoured God, whenever they shrunk from *openly* acknowledging Him;—she can get no farther, for sobs come faster and faster; the boys are pushed out, and the conscience-stricken mother withdraws, without another word; Sarah silently begins to undress; while our brave little Mary, going up to her, throws her arms round her neck, saying, "Dear Sarah, don't be vexed, I didn't mind much." But the only notice Sarah takes is to fling her sister off, and turn sulkily away; she is uncomfortable, but will not own it; Mary is hurt, and gets sorrowfully into bed; Sarah soon follows her, but cannot sleep, and, before half an hour has elapsed, her sister feels a kiss on her wet cheek, and hears the whispered words, "I am *so* sorry, Molly."

The next morning our little friend is not molested, while she offers up prayer and praise; and, were we to peep in upon them a few evenings later, we should see, not one, but two kneeling figures by that same bedside; and we know how angels must rejoice while those young bowed heads show forth, by these open signs of worship, the honour and praise of the gracious God, who bids them address Him by the sweet name of "Father."

May this view of the private life of some of our young scholars, lead us, their responsible teachers, to labour more earnestly than ever to impress such practical truths on their minds, as shall lead (by God's blessing) to real change of life. With regard to the most efficient mode of imparting instruction, our one great aim should undoubtedly be, to send the children home with a fixed, definite, idea on their minds; the subject may be embellished and regarded from every possible point of view, that each child may be made to feel the lesson is for *him*, or *herself*, in particular; but we should restrain ourselves from great digressions, which are certain to turn the attention from the main point, and cram the little heads with vague notions, which, like a number of footprints on a snow-clad path, confuse and obliterate one another; while one undeviating subject leaves as distinct an impression, on attentive minds, as one firm step produces on untrodden snow.

As we have seen, success is *not* invariable; we must expect frequent disappointments; at the same time, instances are not wanting of manifest signs of the grace which it has pleased God to grant to many children, after they have received instruction from the lips of His faithful labourers in the Sunday school.

Hana.

THE PURSUIT OF LOST HAPPINESS.

"WHERE?" Job, xxviii., v. 12, 14, 20, 22.

"Youthful Happiness will not return"—
Would a voice often cry in my heart;
Self-reproaches embitter'd the scorn,
So it pierc'd like the point of a dart.

For by Cam's reedy source had we stray'd;
Hand in hand had we pour'd forth our song,
Where the trout and the halcyon play'd,
The bright pebbles, and alders among.

With my youth, the bright hours past away;
Came the world, and young Happiness fled;
So I mourn'd, and was conscious all day
How cold was my heart, and how dead!

Idle Fancy reported her haunt
Where yon elms overshadow the ground:
But rudeness, defilement, and want,
In that lonely thatch'd cottage I found.

Can Wealth in the halls of her pride,
Detain Thee, I cried, in constraint?
There satiety—closely allied—
Pours on the vex'd ear her complaint.

Can the Students' encloister'd retreat?
The temples of Science shine fair—
But his weary brow teaches my feet,
To turn from pursuing thee there.

War summons his legions to fame;
Honor's standard above him floats free:
If my heart could repose on a name,
He invites me to glory and thee.—

* * * *

When I turn me from life's busy mart,
And to Nature address my fond prayer;
With derision she pierces my heart;
Her contempt only mocks my despair.

Hollow earth, ocean's depths, air's expanse,
With indifference answer my plea,
And the grave echoes back their response—
"Thy lost treasure abides not with me."

Yea, destruction and death shout across
The abyss, while Hell's irony cheers,
As I mention thy name and my loss,—
"We had heard of her fame with our ears."

* * * *

Sweetest offspring of Love! Vision dear
To him who pursues thy bright form,
Once more give me thy presence to share,
E'er I make my cold bed with the worm.

And she answered:—"O seek not afar,
"Child of sorrow, my solace and me,
"Who delight to preside like a star,
"O'er the tent of man's dwelling and thee.

"Thy own blindness o'ershadows my ray;
Thou hast sought me thro' earth's crowded frame;
If I come at thy call, canst thou say,
Thou wilt welcome me just as I am?"

"Yes, Happiness, gladly," I cried,
"Thy conditions lost man should approve:"—
The clouds seemed at once to divide,
And Happiness came from Above.

Ever since I retain my bright guest,
Too wise through earth's mazes to rove;
She attends me in radiance dress'd,
And rewards my full heart with her love.

Gunfreston, Tenby. **G. N. S.**

THE MOUNTAIN RILL.

It was a merry little rill that flowed down the mountain side which skirted our old homestead; now bubbling over stony steps, rough hewn by nature's hand, ringing its lovely music throughout the busy day, and in silent night with more solemn tones warning off the unwary wanderer; now silently meandering between green banks fringed with the waving fern, and gay with the blue-eyed forget-me-not; now winding round farmer Brice's meadow-land, making his green pastures greener still, and supplying its cattle with refreshing draughts:—then passing on with undiminished strength and speed till, met by kindred rills, it lost its own identity. And so the

rivulets from the hills above, uniting in loving harmony, flowed on in one wide stream—a noble river. Our own little rill was at once the wonder and playmate of our childhood. How we loved to trace it up to its source, climbing on with panting breath scarce stopping to pluck the gem-like flowers on our upward way! The waterfall was all in all to us, in those days. The summit reached, what strange feelings of wondering awe stole over us as we listened to the waters' ceaseless song (the only sound to disturb the silence of the hills) which now were dark, now light, as the clouds smiled or frowned upon them. Scarcely would we venture to call to the laggards below. A mysterious spell was over our laughing hearts and voices, and we seldom tried to break it, but remained still and thoughtful, till we came again on a level with the gushing water, and then it was manageable and all our own to sport with. At its edge we stooped to drink from cups and hands, or with bare feet we crossed its shallowest ford, loitering out the summer day, seldom weary and never out of humour with our playmate. But a summer came, which for heat and drought even old farmer Brice could not recall its like. The hay was housed without a shower, and still the sky was deep and unbeclouded. The corn was ripe indeed, the golden ears drooped heavily, and all rejoiced at the rich harvest in store. But the air at length became feverish, here and there a reaper fell sick and died, and more than one traveller was smitten with a sun-stroke. Even the nights were breathless, and our little limbs usually so pliable and active, grew strangely languid long before night came. We missed our baths too, for many a pump was dry, and water now was fetched a weary way. "Only for one look at the fall," whispered cousin Teddy one evening; and we two stole off silently together, secure in our childish simplicity, that though the stream might be dry at the mountain's base, it could not fail us at its summit. With aching feet we climbed, but not one drop was there to cool the little hot hands which clung to the scorched-up banks. There remained only a narrow ridge, all dry and hard! We descended by the rough bed, the most toilsome, but the newest way down, and disappointed and fractious we returned home to join in the evening prayer to the Great Father of all, "Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth." Ps. cxlvii. 8.

Dear fellow labourers, this streamlet, whether doing its merry work, or dried up by a summer's sun, whether unrenewed by dropping clouds, or ice-bound by winter's frost, may teach us many a lesson. The source of its activity, beauty, purity, and usefulness was from above. The supply from heaven restrained, the genial showers withdrawn, and it was quenched. Would *we* water others, we ourselves must be daily watered. Our life must be "hid with Christ

in God," and by Him hourly renewed if we would be fertilizing, transparent, progressive and harmonious teachers. Ours is a happy glorious work; why not then take our part in it more cheerfully, and wear more of the brightness of Christianity in our several classes? Young people may be won by the charm that vital godliness gives to the character of their teacher, when the shafts of rebuke would rebound unskilful to wound, or wounding only to leave a rankling fester behind. We must aim at being pure and transparent, as Christ was pure and transparent. "Whatsoever things are lovely," let us think of these things and covet them. And that our life and activity be not quenched, let us watch, lest the feverish excitement of our daily toils and petty cares should parch our souls and unfit them for communion with our God. And when the blessing *has* been given, when the clouds *have* dropped their fatness, let us beware how we yield to worldly vanities and frivolities. If we give them place in our hearts, homes, or Sabbath Schools, our spirituality as individuals, or as a band of teachers will be gradually chilled, till at length, as profitless as a frozen rill, we shall have nothing left to us but the name and profession of christians and teachers. And often indeed do the hard outlines of a teacher's character, and the long acquired habits of self-denial, remain when the love that gave birth to those habits has been ice-bound by worldly conformity. The teacher's seat may be occupied, but the little ones soon learn to distinguish the words of the lip from the language of the heart, and over the irregularity of a once flourishing class, over the nipping of the young, tender blade (which needed all a teacher's fostering love, and careful watering) we mourn a frozen or unreplenished stream, a prayer-forgetting, or a world-conforming Sabbath teacher.

C. E. M.

Everton.

"HIS COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT GRIEVOUS."

Cecil has said that he met with more things to try his faith, whilst walking from St. Paul's to Temple Bar, than in any books of infidel authors. Undoubtedly, the same temptations which beset the Royal Psalmist, and older still, the Patriarch Job, assail many a thoughtful mind now. To take an illustration from a case just now too painfully conspicuous, it is more dangerous that Bishop Colenso should plunge into scepticism, than that he should fill volumes with

plausible, but ill-considered objections. His example is far more to be dreaded than his arguments.

But amidst all the various trials of our faith that arise from witnessing the prevalence of ungodliness, the triumphing of the wicked, and the sufferings of God's people; there is one point that the Christian will do well to dwell upon (not indeed as the only refuge, but as itself no slight one), namely, that all evils that afflict the world, except the physical ones that belong to mortality, would be swept away at a stroke, were the will of God universally known and obeyed He against whose life no breath of calumny could be raised, even by excited enemies panting for His blood. He who hallowed, whilst He fulfilled the law of God, left behind Him, both by precept and example, such a Revelation of the Divine will, that no "honest and good heart" will ever refuse to admit that a general likeness to it would bring about heaven on earth. Not a commandment, not a rule is to be found there, that does not conduce directly and clearly to the welfare and happiness of mankind. "His commandments are not grievous." It is a tempting theme, in this its wide and general aspect; but my object is to follow it out only in reference to our own peculiar work as teachers. I trust we are all endeavouring to act on the precept "Feed my lambs"—does that also fulfil the purpose I have assigned to all God's commandments, namely, the happiness of those who obey it, as well as of the receivers of the service? Is the Sunday school a path to heaven, if entered with the pure motive of loving obedience?

Let us cast our eyes around. We mingle amongst multitudes that evidently need the Gospel which (I will assume) we ourselves have received and valued. In all ranks, in all ages, in all varieties of condition both mental and spiritual, they throng around us, crossing our daily path. The degrees of their connection with us are as various. Some are seen or spoken to but once, then parted for ever: others are inmates of our own dear homes, sharers in our own life's history. Some are separated by barriers of either rank, or ability, or reserve, that seem to place a gulf between us, whilst others are easily accessible, and open to any influence.

Amidst the multiplicity of work thus inviting us, it becomes a duty for a devout mind to enquire which is our proper path. Whom shall we seek to influence? When? Where? How? Our Father's will may lead different members of His Church to widely different fields of exertion, but all will surely have some work to do; some souls to seek, be it the crowded congregation of a large Church, or the little class of a village Sunday school, or even the single old pensioner in a cottage or a hospital. It is not the will of our Father in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish: it is not His

will that any one of His people should try to pass through life rejoicing in his own safety, without endeavouring to bring some one else to share in that glorious privilege. There are, however, many who would shrink from using the words, "Am I my brother's keeper?" who yet in fact live in accordance with them. Carelessness on such a point is no trivial sin. The Priest and the Levite that pass by on the other side, have turned their back on their Lord and Master—"Ye did it not to ME."

God's will, then, requires of us all, some amount of personal exertion for the Salvation of our fellow-creatures. Yielding a glad and cheerful obedience to that will, and humbly asking of Him to guide us in the especial path He intends us to follow, what do we then find? Is this commandment "GRIEVOUS?"

Let us look on it as applicable to our own work, that of Sunday school teaching. What does obedience to the command involve?

It involves PATIENT, INTELLIGENT, PRAYERFUL, LABOUR—labour, be it remembered, for the souls of others, not for their mere temporal welfare. In such labour our Lord passed the years of His ministry on earth, delighting to do His Heavenly Father's will. In such labour the true follower of His Lord will also delight, then most like Him when most earnestly seeking to bring others to Him.

To exercise the body is a sign and a source of health. The same may be said of the mind. And when the exercise is directed to acquiring more knowledge of Divine truth, more skill in imparting it, more influence over our class, more patient control of ourselves, such mental labour, so far from being grievous, brings with it a pure pleasure and a certain reward. Carefully shunning the dangerous byeway of pride and self-conceit, yet following with earnest steady effort the path of knowledge, we may find the intellect enlightened and strengthened, and the grasp of mind daily spreading. Such a happy result, though not the end we aim at, is yet of itself a welcome recompense. Many of us are little conscious how much in this sense we owe to our Sunday school work.

And again, PRAYERFUL LABOUR. Surely whatever leads us to be constant and diligent in prayer must be in itself a blessing. That a heartfelt love for our teaching and for our children will lead us to pray for them is only saying, in other words, that we use on the behalf of those under our care the same privilege we value for ourselves. And as we grow in experience, as we learn more of difficulties, disappointments, temptations and failure, the more shall we lean on Divine aid, and seek it in constant prayer.

This then is the point I would impress on my readers. A commission is entrusted to us, a work is given us to do; labour, patient and thoughtful—and prayer, earnest and believing, are required of

us: and this commandment, so far from being grievous, proves to be but another instance of the wise love of our Father. He Himself has pointed out this path to happiness, and has thereby sought the welfare not only of those yet "far off," but also of those who are comparatively "near" to Him, and whom He graciously employs in seeking the wanderers.

And if there be happiness in the process, how much more in the result! The saying that mercy is "twice blessed," that is, blesses both the giver and receiver, is doubly true of Christian sympathy. And many an unexpected revelation of results, in that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest, will kindle fresh and higher thankfulness and joy. Many a child of God will then find fresh cause of adoring love in that he was led to labour when on earth, and was laid under a commandment, which so far from being grievous was adapted to develop the highest type of a Christian, and to impart the highest amount of happiness.

E. G. F.

A DEVOTED SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER.

The following brief account was afforded me a short time ago, by a very dear friend with whom I have been long acquainted, and who resided for many years in the same neighbourhood with me in Paris, with permission to make what use I pleased of it.

"We should eagerly seize upon every opportunity of fulfilling the mission assigned us. I was led to make the foregoing remark, from a circumstance which occurred not long ago under my own immediate observation.

"Towards the beginning of summer, some few years ago, I was one afternoon rather suddenly, and even painfully surprised, by the visit of a friend, a young clergyman, but lately ordained. I say that I was painfully surprised, because I had seen him only a few months before, in apparently excellent health, and now his whole appearance presented a melancholy and wonderfully rapid change for the worse.

"'My dear young friend,' I said, 'I am very happy to see you in Paris, but have you been ill? You look very pale and thin.'

"'Yes,' he answered, 'I have been very ill. I believe I have been doing too much, for I am not naturally very strong; and the doctors have sent me to France for change of air, and have recommended perfect tranquillity both of mind and body, for some time. I was

ordered to the South, but I begged hard to be allowed to come here, where I have at least one friend, in preference to going to a place where I know nobody; and I have come straight to you, my good friend, as I would to my own brother, perfectly sure that you will kindly undertake to find me a nice and comfortable home, somewhere in the country, where I shall find all I want. In the meantime, you may put me anywhere you please, so as I can have perfect rest and quiet.'

"'This is right,' said I, 'and I am glad to see that you treat me as a real friend, and just as I would have done, had I been in your place, and you in mine.'

"I made my young friend as comfortable as I could for the present, and then set out in search of what he so much wanted—a quiet and agreeable home, in good air, and a pretty country-place at a short distance from Paris, where he would be treated with kindness and attention. I thought I could not do better, in order to find all this, than apply to some well-known physician in good practice, and I therefore directed my steps to the abode of a celebrated English doctor, above thirty years known as a most clever and kind-hearted man amongst his fellow country-people in Paris; but here I was disappointed, he knew of nothing that he thought would suit my friend, and he advised me to put a short advertisement for the purpose in a good and much-read newspaper. Whilst going to the newspaper office I met a French doctor, whom I had already seen several times in a friend's house, where he attended as physician, and I mentioned to him what I was in search of. He said that he thought he knew of something that might suit, and that if I could wait till the next day, he would call upon me in the morning, and inform me of the result of his inquiries.

"He was as good as his word, and the next morning whilst my young friend and I were sitting at breakfast, M. C——, the French doctor was ushered in. He came to let us know that on quitting me the previous afternoon, he had set off by the railroad to a pretty little country place on the banks of the Seine, at about twelve miles from Paris, where Madame H———, a German widow lady lived with her four children, and their aged grandmother. He there found with much satisfaction, that by making some small alteration in their household arrangements, they would be able to accommodate my friend Mr. S—— and make him quite comfortable.

"'I have not the least doubt, my dear sir,' said the obliging doctor to my friend, 'but that you will be perfectly well taken care of by those two excellent women. I have known them many years, and have seen them in moments of the deepest affliction always resigned and even cheerful. Monsieur H———, who had been a professor

of German, died two years ago. I attended him on his death-bed and accompanied him, almost alone, to the churchyard, knowing at the time, that the last farthing the two sad mourners possessed had been paid down by them for the expenses, trifling as they were, of his plain and unostentatious funeral. Since then I have continued to visit them at various intervals, and have always come away much edified by their patient and simple-hearted conduct and conversation. Their circumstances are a little improved of late; the eldest son has obtained a good situation in the railway office, and the old lady has been offered a few young children to take care of during the day, whilst her daughter goes out to give lessons in the neighbourhood. And now, added M. C——, they will be ready to receive you whenever you like, and if you choose, I can accompany you there, either this evening, or to-morrow morning.'

"Mr. S—— most gladly accepted the kind doctor's proposal, who immediately wrote a few lines to Madame H———, in order that everything might be in readiness for his reception in her small and homely dwelling.

"M. C—— came back the same evening, as my friend was anxious not to lose another day, so desirous was he of recovering his strength soon, in order to re-commence his labour of love amongst his dear, and much attached parishioners at B——, and above all to return to his beloved little Sunday-school, the object of his most constant care, and unremitting attention. He insisted on my accompanying him, and we all three set out after an early dinner, on a lovely summer's evening in the beginning of June. I shall never forget the beautiful view we had, as we went along, of the country around, then bathed in the glowing hues of the setting sun, fast descending behind the hills far away to the west, nor our pleasant walk up the shady avenue of horse-chestnut trees which led by a gentle acclivity to Madame H———'s neat little abode. The doctor's letter had arrived in time, and our visit was quite expected.

"Madame H——, a sweet and gentle looking woman of about forty years of age, still wearing widow's garments, although her husband had been dead about two years, came forward with courteous smiles and graceful demeanour to wish us a kind and hearty welcome. My friend George, although naturally of a timid and reserved disposition, was soon quite at home with his kind hostess and her amiable family, and before we took our leave, the doctor and I saw him comfortably seated in an easy arm chair in his neat and quiet little bed-room. I promised to come back to see him soon, which I did in a few days with doctor C——, who had kindly consented to visit him and give him his advice from time to time.

"I found my young friend not looking nearly so well as I had hoped, and I seriously began to fear that his was a hopeless case, and that I should soon have to perform the painful duty of accompanying him to his grave, in the same solitary little churchyard where poor Madame H——'s husband had been interred two years before. I then perceived that M. C—— entertained the same apprehension, and as we returned together that night by the last train to Paris, he acknowledged in reply to my anxious inquiries that he had but little hope of my friend's recovery.

"I was forced by most urgent business to absent myself from Paris about this time, and I took leave of George S—— with sad forebodings that this was our last interview on earth.

"On my return about two months later, I hastened directly to visit my young friend. It was a beautiful Sabbath morning at the latter end of August, and I was agreeably surprised to find him looking much better than the last time I had seen him. The weather was not oppressively hot as it had been the day before, but delightfully fresh after a heavy shower of rain, and my friend George was about to leave the house. He asked me to accompany him, and we walked pleasantly together down the chestnut-tree avenue, and along the banks of the river, till we arrived at a small white-washed house at the entrance of the village. We were met at the door by Louis H——, George's landlady's eldest son; he opened a door at the other end of the passage, and I most unexpectedly found myself in the midst of a score of little good-humoured looking and rosy-cheeked boys and girls, all assembled there by the unremitting exertions of Madame H——'s son Louis, and awaiting with eager impatience the arrival of their kind and good Sunday School teacher, George S——. Some of the children were English, and to those who did not understand that language, Louis H——, who spoke it fluently, performed the office of interpreter. Our arrival was soon followed by that of Madame H—— and the rest of her family, and my friend George had the satisfaction of addressing a pretty numerous and certainly most attentive little assembly.

"When the instruction was concluded, George S—— and I returned to Madame H——'s by the same path along the river side, and he then told me how Louis H—— and he had felt an almost instantaneous drawing towards each other on their first introduction; and how much his young friend had exerted himself in order to satisfy George's longing desire of seeing a Sunday School commenced in that neighbourhood. 'I am convinced,' added Mr. S——, 'that the gratification I have experienced from the success which has attended our endeavours in this respect, has materially contributed to the

improvement of my health, and that now, through the blessing of God, I shall soon recover my strength completely.'

"And so indeed it was, and, from that time, my dear young friend continued daily to improve in health and spirits, so that before the expiration of the summer, he was able to return to his Church and to his beloved Sunday School at home. He bequeathed his Sunday Scholars on the banks of the Seine to his friend Louis H———, with many entreaties to continue the good work he had commenced, and the faithful promise on his own part of returning some day soon to pay us a second visit. He did return the following year, and found his little Sunday School going on and prospering under his friend Louis' active and judicious superintendence; and from time to time he continues to visit his friends near Paris, and to recruit his strength by a few weeks of rest and perfect tranquillity."

And thus terminates my friend's illustration of the sentence with which he commenced: "We should eagerly seize upon every opportunity of fulfilling the mission assigned us."

Paris, 1862. S. W. B.

The Teacher in his Study.

THE SYSTEMATIC STUDY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE,

A PRIMARY HELP TO THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.

[The substance of an Address delivered at the first Meeting of the Shoreditch Church Sunday School Society, October 24th, 1862, by the Rev. J. T. Jeffcock, M.A., St. Saviour's, Hoxton.]

We are so accustomed to speak of the Bible and to call it "the Bible," in an impersonal kind of way, that we often forget what the Great Book is, and Who is the Great Author of it. Now "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God;" it has, then, one Author, and is one work. If any of you send a message by several in your class to some persons at a distance, you employ different agents for different parts of it, but it is from you that the whole emanates. In some such way we may realize to ourselves, how Holy Scripture delivered by many Authors is yet the sole work of one Inspiring God.

Now on this oneness hangs the principal part of the remarks which I am about to make. The Holy Bible is the Word of God, and amidst its great diversity of writers, times, places, and subjects,

this fact gives unity to the whole. If then the Holy Bible be one, and its Author God, we are not at liberty to put any portion of it aside as needless, unimportant, or superfluous; for in such matters, God only is the judge of what is necessary for the instruction, reproof, and correction of the people of His hand. If, then, no part of it is unimportant, surely we ought to propose to ourselves some plan by which we may be able, in a greater or less time, to make ourselves thoroughly acquainted with the whole. I am not now speaking about reading, or "getting up" isolated passages on purpose for the Sunday class; this, we all of course do, but I am speaking of studying the Word of God in order that our souls may be fed thereby, and our spiritual nature grow in knowledge and depth.

It may be true that some parts are not so important as others, yet that is no reason why those only which we are pleased to term important should be read, and the rest treated, I will not say as of less importance, but as absolutely unimportant, if not altogether needless. In the genealogy, at the beginning of St. Matthew's Gospel, for instance, is virtually contained the adoption of the Gentiles, to be sons of God, no less than the Jews, by the fact, that Rahab and Ruth, both of them Gentiles, are set down as ancestors of Christ. If you pass over these genealogies as mere strings of names, you are apt to lose something of the fulness of God's teaching; let alone, that names in old days often stood for characters, or distinguishing attributes of the individuals to which they belonged. If we view Scripture as a whole, every part will be recognized to have its use, though we may not always at once be able to see the usefulness of it. In a picture, for example, the principal figures may be regarded as possessing the chief interest, when first you look at it; but the eye delights afterwards to trace how the master hand has filled in the other portions of the painting. You may call them unimportant if you like, but lay bare the canvas on each side of these principal figures, and the effect will soon show you that your judgment had better bend before the great master whom you venture to criticize. If this be so in human works of art, it is a hundredfold more so in the Book of God. As in our prayers we speak to God, so in His Word we hear Him speak to us. When God speaks, it is our place to listen, and not to reckon that idle or superfluous, which he vouchsafes to utter for our instruction.

By reading the Bible through consecutively, we gain a fuller notion of God's truth, than we can in any other way. Texts are very good things to have at one's fingers ends, but if we know little of the body of God's truth, of which they are but fragments, we have but a very distorted view of the symmetry and fair proportions of the whole. If a sculptor be clever at producing the human hand

from a block of marble, but have no notion of the relative size and proportion of the other parts of the body, his statue when completed will be only a deformity, hardly redeemed by the one beautiful member which it possesses. You might take a more homely illustration, from looking at the miserably distorted pictures which school-boys draw on their slates, though these sometimes have some feature or other tolerably true to nature. If one truth is swollen to colossal size, it dwarfs its neighbouring truths, and, perhaps, buries some from sight altogether. If a man selects texts from the Holy Bible solely with reference to faith, what becomes of good works? if, with reference solely to Holy Baptism, what becomes of faith? if solely to predestination, what becomes of free will? if solely to conversion, what becomes of our adoption in baptism? Whereas, if he would study the whole Bible, and not confine himself to isolated passages, he would find that the faith would slowly, perhaps, yet gradually, by God's blessing stand out before him, here more clearly, there perhaps more obscurely, yet the whole as one divine building, in all its beauty, symmetry and extent. If he cannot at once perceive the harmony which exists between the parts of this divine whole, let him be humble enough to attribute their seeming disagreement to his own want of spiritual discernment, and not to any discordance in the counsel of God; and let him be content to wait rather, till God open his eyes to take in the harmonious whole, than thrust out from its due place in God's revealed truth any one part, through his own leaning to some more favorite doctrine.

You must often have noticed how a child can only give his attention to one thing at a time, and if his mind is really engrossed in it, how he overlooks everything that is going on round about him; though if he only looked a little on each side of him, he would find much that would enlarge his knowledge, and correct his judgment of the very thing which has riveted his attention. In the things of God, as we are at best but children, and usually apprehend the truths of faith one by one, each of these in turn assumes a prominence in our souls, which needs subsequent adjustment; and it generally happens that those parts of the truth which we pass over most lightly, are the very parts, which, if allowed their due influence in our souls, would go the furthest to correct the failings and frailties of our *natural* hearts, by giving to them that counterbalance which grace alone can supply.

For the spiritual growth, then, of our own souls, a systematic study of Holy Scripture is required; but to the Sunday School teacher, this consecutive reading of the whole is necessary for an additional reason. It is very like quackery, to teach that of which you know little or nothing; or to have only three or four nostrums for every

conceivable use; and the teacher who is primed with only a few texts, or who has "got up" his Scripture lesson for the day, and little beyond it, must, in spiritual matters, be looked upon very much in this light. Your teaching is sure to be distorted, if you know the text, but not the context; it is sure to be bald, if you have read the chapter, but not the book; it will lack breadth and fulness, if you have read some books to the neglect of the rest. You must be furnished at all points. Let me explain my meaning: you ask a question of a boy, point-blank; he gives you anything but a point-blank answer; yet amidst a mass of irrelevant matter, you detect some spark of truth which has got there, it would seem almost by chance. Your wisdom is to follow up the spark of truth through its windings, and fan it into a flame, drawing out from the mind of your scholar whatever dim and faint beginnings of knowledge may be smouldering there. A teacher who has never read his Bible systematically, either fails to detect this little truth in the helpless answer of his scholar; or, seeing it, has not the knowledge which is required to follow it up: any how he extinguishes the spark, or sticks closely to the meagre line of instruction which he has marked out for himself, and what is the effect on the scholar? he has tried his best to answer the question; and though nine-tenths of his answer were worthless, the practised teacher would have made the most of what little truth there was, and instead of cutting his scholar short, would have quickened his apprehensions in spiritual knowledge, or, at least, have given him encouragement to answer as well or better another time.

Again, those who have tried to teach the Church Catechism efficiently will know well the value of having in store illustrations of vice, virtue, states of life, &c., taken from the doings and feelings of saints in the old and new Testaments. The character of Christ in the new, overshadows everything else, and presents the perfect Man: and the half-formed or growing characters of the Apostles and others, will also furnish excellent matter for illustrating Christian life; but we seem to learn the history of vice, and of human nature unaided by christian grace, most fully in the old Testament. He who has not studied the Bible systematically, will make his Catechism lesson but dull, routine, work. Similarly, if a teacher is giving a lesson explanatory of the Prayer book, he must not only have the lives of God's faithful people well before him, but also must be able to prove, or illustrate the doctrines and customs of the Church from Holy Writ.

One or two practical hints shall conclude my remarks. First, as to the *manner* in which you should read the Bible;—it will be best for you to read, neither too much, nor too little, at once: too much is apt

to make you slur it over, and lose some portion of even its obvious teaching; too little, will break off the thread of the subject, and make your reading less intelligible. I believe that most of you are busily occupied during the day at your various avocations, and therefore, to protect your reading from dwindling into solitary texts, or from expanding into slip-shod lengthiness, I would suggest that you read about half a chapter every day. Begin St. Matthew to-morrow, for example, reading half the first chapter; the day after to-morrow the other half; and so on in regular order. At the end of two months, you will have finished his Gospel; another month will see you at the end of St. Mark; and five months more, will see you at the end of the Acts of the Apostles: thus in about eight months, you will have gone through the whole of the historical books of the new Testament; and that, not so rapidly as to confuse, nor so tardily as to break the thread of their teaching. Apply the same rule to the Epistles, Revelation, and to the Old Testament. If any of you have more time, it would be better to follow out the Church's daily course of Lessons in the Calendar; but for most teachers who are busily employed, I think that half a chapter, honestly read through, and prayerfully weighed and considered, is the best daily lesson. When you have completed any book, it would be well to review it, reading over again, all at once, the narrative of any event which extends itself over more than one of your usual portions; such for example as the narrative of the crucifixion, the Epistles to the Seven Churches of Asia, or the history of Joseph and his brethren: and when there are parallel accounts of the same transactions, on concluding the separate accounts, it will be time well spent to compare them and see how one elucidates and supplements the other; the three first Gospels for example; and the Books of Kings and Chronicles.

I hope every one of you has a Reference Bible. The Christian Knowledge Society supplies them for two shillings. The great use of them is this; as Holy Scripture proceeds from one source only, we may expect to find not only agreement between every part, but clear light shed in one place on that which in a former passage is only darkly hinted at, in a later is assumed as known already. If then you compare the passage referred to in the margin, with that which you are reading, you will often find that what by itself seems dark or dull, is kindled into warmth and flame by contact with its fellow passage. The Holy Ghost condescends in one place to clear up for our weak understandings that which, in another, seems shadowy or obscure. This above all things gives scope to the enquiring mind, which approaches the Word of God in a spirit of humility, seeking there for guidance, and hope, and life.

The Church has published no authorised commentary; but we

may gain a little, sometimes a great deal of assistance, from the headings prefixed to the chapters, which I would always read before commencing the chapter. In the Prayer Book, however, in the selection of particular passages of Scripture for particular Seasons or Services, we may often gather what is the mind of the Church as to their meaning.

And now one word on the *time* when it is best to read your daily lesson. If you are engaged at your business all day, you must take a few quiet minutes either before or after your work-hours. Do not let it be after the work is done: your powers of mind and body are then jaded, and the cares of the day may perhaps intrude themselves upon your study-time, with inconvenient importunity. Choose the early morning. Give God the first fruits of the new day which He has given to you. Let your soul, with its powers refreshed and strong, employ itself for a few minutes on the Word of God; that it may be fed thereby, and enabled by His strength to encounter and overcome whatever temptations He may call upon it to meet that day. You know at what hour your daily work begins; you do not always know at what hour it will close. The few minutes preceding your work are a certainty: the few minutes succeeding it are very uncertain. Let that time which you can command, be assigned to God's Word; and not the bare possibility of a time over which you have but little control. I remember the present Bishop of Norwich advising us, when candidates for ordination, to devote, through life, the first few minutes after rising in the morning to communion of the soul in prayer with God; then to give the next portion of time to increasing our knowledge of God's will, and doings, by quiet study of His Word; and then to go to our daily task as labourers in His vineyard: and the more I test his advice, both by practice and by omission, the more I am persuaded it is sound. Do you in the same way, give your earliest thoughts and feelings to God in communion and prayer; then give the renewed energies of your soul and body to making half a chapter of God's Word your own: and then go out, and do your duty manfully in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call you. By these means you will find your soul grow in grace; your knowledge, your experience, your faith, your feelings, will be deepened and strengthened; and as your own spiritual nature improves, so may your ability to teach the lambs of Christ's flock be expected to improve likewise. You will thus become, by God's grace, a man of God, "perfect and thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

SCRIPTURE PHILOLOGY.

No. III.—Idiomatic Words and Phrases.

Exod. xi. 10. "And *the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart*, so that he would not let the people go."

From the consciousness of limitation attendant upon, and inseparable from our condition as finite creatures; and from our knowledge of God our Creator and Preserver, as infinite and uncontrolled, it follows that we are impressed with the conviction that God is the doer of all things. "Whatsoever is done in heaven above, or on the earth beneath, He doeth it Himself." "For of Him, and to Him, and through Him are all things, to whom be glory for ever and ever."

But though the mystery arising from this fact, which hangs over all creation, is unfathomable—and so with Job, we exclaim "It is high as heaven, what can we know? It is deeper than hell—what can we do?" it is not thus with the inspired word of God. "All that was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." In "the Word," this mystery which involves man is no doubt often recognised, but it is never explained—it cannot be; for to the *finite* such knowledge is denied, "it is too wonderful and excellent for me; I cannot attain unto it."

It cannot however be wise or lawful to merge the *revealed* mysteries of the Holy Books in the great mystery of finite and infinite existence, and say, "these things are above our comprehension"—for then how shall we get the comfort of them? The "comfort of the Scriptures," is the comfort of what we know from their teachings, and not from what we give up as unintelligible, and leave as too dark for our minds. The mystery of God's agency in the hardness of impenitent sinners, is one of those facts revealed in Scripture, but passed over by many as a thing quite incomprehensible, and very unedifying; while others are disposed to say,—"It is all very plain; it is judicial blindness." But are there not many things said about it which show it is a *culpable* blindness? and therefore, so far, it cannot possibly be judicial.

The case of Pharaoh gives us as good an instance as we could wish, for the consideration of this agency, and we bring out under the head of an idiomatic usage, the assertion that it was the Lord who hardened Pharaoh's heart, because to attribute to the direct interference of God, the common events of life, is a custom that prevailed among the Jews, and prevails among other Eastern nations to this day. Where *we* should say, for instance, it rains, or it hails, or it

thunders, the Jew would commonly say, "The Lord thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave His voice, hail, and coals of fire," which last missives are explained in Exodus to be the thunderbolts which accompany lightning. Among writers who recognise this habit of the Jews, Joseph Wolff, himself a converted Jew, affords us a good instance in his Autobiography, p. 276. Describing the shocks of an earthquake in the desert where he was, he writes "The wild Bedouins flying over the plain one after another, as they passed Wolff on their wild horses, cried out to him,—'This is the Lord—this is the Lord.' This is beautiful in the East, that the people always come to the prime cause of everything—to God Himself. They do not as Europeans do, invariably dwell on second causes; but they refer every event at once to the Over-ruler of the world."

Now we are inclined to think that this fact which we have pointed out, and which is here recognised, and was so congenial to Dr. Wolff, might render all further comment on the passage that stands at the head of this paper, unnecessary; however, as there is more that may be said, to edification, we think, we will proceed to say it, and to analyze the subject somewhat.

The agency of God in human obduracy—this is the subject. "*The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart*"—this is the example.

There are two ordinary ways in which the Most High is pleased to work among the children of men—the one physically, the other morally; the one by His providence, the other by His Spirit. We will take the last first—the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, the good Spirit, "the Holy Ghost, the Comforter." By this good Spirit, blessed be His name, God works mediately and immediately in and upon the children of men. Greatest and most blessed of living truths! The hardened would deny it, but of the righteous by faith, it is said, and still most truly, "Ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." It is by this, His Spirit, that God directly *acts* upon the hearts of the children of men. Here is His direct spiritual agency. Now, taking the most common, natural, and simple view of the operations of the Holy Ghost, namely, His creating within, "the humble, lowly, and *contrite* heart,"—His comforting the now repentant spirit, and teaching the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge,—is there anything in these operations of a hardening nature? Can hardening be ascribed to this "*Dove*" of God, or to His proper operations? We need not answer this question; we may boldly say, with all our readers, God never, by His *Holy* Spirit, hardened Pharaoh's heart; it is impossible.

Come we, then, next, to God's *providential agency*. By this He also works directly and indirectly among mankind, and so works

that not the smallest event happens, but it is a thread in the complex mazy web of His invisible interference. "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without your Father." We cannot strengthen this assertion, nor mend this example. This is *His* providence, and *His* alone. Was it thus, then, in His providence, that He hardened Pharaoh's heart? The *history* seems to us again and again to reply, "Yes, it was even so." Now, let us look at this history. First, we see this unhappy, wicked man, exalted, raised up, and made conspicuous and prominent by the throne of Egypt. Then, next, comes a fair, just, and reasonable command to him—"Let my people go." "My time is come to perform my word to Abraham their father; and you are so oppressing them that it can be borne no longer. Let my people go, that they may serve me."

Now, how does this command, preceding the providential deliverance of Israel, act upon the king? He resists it at once; he will not quietly submit to the loss of 600,000 slaves and their rising families; and as to God, he knows Him not, and does not care to know Him; his is another God, Οσιρισ, or Apis.

Well—yes, well; "for we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth;" God must carry out His good and gracious intentions towards Israel, and means to be known upon earth by them, and distinguished from "the gods of the heathen, which were but vanity." So Moses must go to Pharaoh again, and repeat the command; not this time with the harmless sign of the rod changed into a serpent, but the rod turning the waters into blood. But "neither did Pharaoh set his heart to this," any more than the other sign. Then, with the frequent repetition of the first command, follow all the plagues of Egypt, all the *reprieves*, all the judgments, all the mercies, and all brought about in the way of God's ordinary, or extraordinary, providence, either by the prevailing winds, or by the soft Nile waters, or the more terrific elements of nature—the lightning and the hail-storm: but all the judgments and the mercies have only one effect—they harden Pharaoh's heart.

Now, whatever they were, God was providentially the sole and supreme author of all. Who, then, can fail to see the propriety of the language, especially as in perfect accordance with Eastern usage, "The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart?"

If it be enquired, as perhaps it may by some, "did God do these things on purpose to harden Pharaoh's heart?" we promptly reply, surely no: was it not obviously to make him let Israel go? And as surely may we apply to this case St. Paul's general dictum, in regard to this long succession and list of judgments, with mercies invariably intervening wherever the proud Monarch humbled himself to seek remission and forgiveness through the mediation of

Moses—"not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance, but after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath," too surely impending over thee and thine; and this, it should be noticed, St. Paul says as pointing out the invariable rule of God, not in this king's case alone, but in the case of all mankind who resist the truth of God's supremacy, His goodness, and His grace. Thus, then, a Jew would say—in fact it is a Jew who does say it—"the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart so that he would not let the people go."

It may further elucidate the ways of God, if we ask, Would similar judgments and mercies have produced the same effect on every heart? The reply is obvious; if they would, why was this man "raised up" and specially selected to spread God's name and character through a portion of that world which was everywhere now fast shaking off the allegiance of God, and upon whom a night was fast closing in, which another and far greater deliverance, in a future age, could alone dispel? The conditions of the human spirit in the world are as varied as of the human body; to some constitutions even disease is afterwards renovating, while to others it is fatal, or leaves at least a weakness never to be removed; but whatever of good there may be in any man, our Christian verity compels us both to feel, and to acknowledge it to be, all of grace.

There was a comparison in use in old time, and among old writers, whereby the ways of God in such matters as this of which we are writing, is shown invariably to be light without darkness, goodness and perfection without alloy; and the opposite *effects* of those ways to result from the character of man.

We place a lump of wax, and a lump of clay, on the same sod of green turf, and in the same sunshine, yet by that warm sunshine the one is hardened, the other softened;—the one becomes more capable of receiving the image of the seal to be impressed, but the other less so, till it is quite incapable of receiving any impression at all. And this is *the very same way* our Lord accounts for the difference attending on the preaching of the Gospel in our day, when he says, "and others *fell on good ground*, and brought forth fruit." Moses preached the Gospel to Pharaoh, but in that case the seed fell upon *a rock*. Now the Lord melt your hearts, my dear reader; it is for us to see that both His judgments, and His mercies, sanctify us. Does any fellow-student ask, "How can I do this?" We reply, *humble yourselves* before Him, and above all try to *trust* Him. This will be to seek salvation "by faith, and not by the deeds of the law." You believe in God; know He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and do not be afraid of Him, but hope in His mercy,

and be rather afraid to live without the inward sense of it. "Trust in Him at all times, ye people; God is a refuge for us."

There is one agency which we have not yet referred to in this matter—the agency of the Devil. In all Pharaoh's progress to perfected hardening, the agency of our enemy is seen in his having recourse to the Magicians, Jannes and Jambres, and in their truly awful proceedings, though convinced that it was "the finger of God." Is there ever a successful temptation in which Satan has not a part?

Gumfreston, Tenby. G. A. S.

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT.

In the present paper we propose to trace the strange and eventful history of this most holy of all the holy things which the Jews possessed—a thing which, while it remained among them, they remained a nation, and when it was lost, their nationality was also lost for ever. As long as the ark of God's strength remained with them, so long they had the visible evidence of God being among them; and when, by any fault of theirs, that holy symbol was lost, they learned what an evil and bitter thing it was to sin against God.

This ark was simply a chest, about five feet long, and half as deep and half as broad. On its top or lid was the mercy seat, and over this the cherubim reached their wings, and between these shone the Shechinah.

I. *Names.*—In many passages of Scripture it is called by the name we have placed above, namely, the Ark of the Covenant; and it was called by this name because it contained the tables of the law, and also the record of many events which occurred in the wilderness. Thus Moses says, in Deut. xxxi., "Take this book of the law, and put it in one side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee;" and the writer of the Hebrews says it contained the tables of the covenant. The Ark of the Testimony is a name which signifies almost the same thing; it was a witness to Israel of what God had wrought for them. In Ex. xxii., when God was speaking to Moses, He said, "Thou shalt put into the ark the testimony that I shall give thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony." From this presence of God over it, it received the name of the ark of God, as in 1 Sam. iii., "ere the lamp of God

went out in the temple where the ark of God was;" and a little further on, in the same book, we read of the ark of God being taken under most disastrous circumstances.

The ark of God's strength was another appellation which it received, on account of the miracles which were performed by it. Thus in Psalm cxxxii., "Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest, Thou and the ark of Thy strength;" and referring to the period in its history at which we have already glanced, God is said to have delivered His strength into captivity, and His glory into the enemy's hand.

II. *Miracles.*—When the Israelites drew towards the end of their journey in the wilderness, and stood on the banks of Jordan, over which they were about to pass, the priests who carried the ark were commanded to stand still in Jordan. As soon as their feet touched the water, which then overflowed its banks, the waters which came down rose up upon a heap, and those which were below were cut off; and there, in the bed of Jordan, the priests rested with the ark, while all the people passed over dry-shod. When the city of Jericho was shut up, and its walls defied the arms of the Israelites, the ark was to be carried round seven times, and those walls should fall. When the Philistines had captured the ark, and brought it into the temple of Dagon, Dagon fell to the ground, and was broken in pieces. The people also suffered grievously at Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron; and at Beth-shemesh the hand of God was very heavy upon them. None might touch the ark except the Levites; and when Uzzah dared to put forth his hand to prevent it's falling to the ground, he died.

III. *General History.*—Moses received the command to make the ark on Mount Sinai. Its pattern and dimensions were minutely given, and the use for which it was intended. It was to contain the law; but, from Hebrews ix. 4, it would seem that the pot of manna and Aaron's rod also rested in it. Of this there is no mention in the Old Testament, and so late as the Kings we read that it contained only the "two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb" (1 Kings viii. 9). Some think the pot of manna and the rod were only laid before it. In Ex. xl., we read of the testimony being placed within the ark. Nothing more is mentioned in connection with it, to which we need direct attention, until the Israelites crossed the Jordan; then, as we have seen, the waters were divided for the people to pass through. In the siege of Jericho, also, it was brought prominently forward, until the walls fell. After Joshua had conquered and divided Canaan, the tabernacle was set up in Shiloh, and the ark was placed within it. Here it remained 300 years, unprofaned through the many oppressions to which the Israelites were subjected during the days of the Judges

of the land, until the time of Eli. When Eli judged Israel, and also filled the office of High Priest, the Philistines were again at war. The Israelites went out against them, and were defeated, with the loss of 4,000 men. They returned to their camps, and began to inquire one of another wherefore the Lord had smitten them. Without coming to any just answer to this all-important question, and without searching their own hearts for the cause, they proposed to fetch the ark of the covenant out of Shiloh and carry it to the battle-field that with it before them they might fight and conquer. They called to mind the mighty works which had been wrought of old, and they remembered the many deliverances they had received; but they did not compare their state now with what it was when Joshua led them. They did not now carry it out by the word of God, but by the word of man, and they trusted more to the ark than to that God whose it was. No one seems to have objected to the sinful proposal. Hophni and Phineas carried it from Shiloh to the camp, and such was the confidence of the Israelites when they saw it, that they raised a shout, which made the earth ring. They would have done well to tremble as Eli did, when he sat by the wayside; he trembled, not for his sons, not for his slaughtered countrymen, but his heart trembled for the ark of God. "Woe unto us!" was the cry from the Philistines; but they determined to quit themselves like men. The result was utter defeat to Israel, with the loss of 30,000 men and the ark of God. This was most disastrous. God, who before had been ever present with them, now appeared to be taken away; and that ark, so holy, was carried away by heathen hands, and placed within a heathen temple. But here it remained not long, for its power was felt in the temple of Dagon at Ashdod, and it was sent to Gath. At Gath the people suffered, also at Ekron, until they determined to send it home. For seven months it remained in the towns of the Philistines, and then it was sent on to Beth-shemesh. The men of Kirjath-jearim fetched it from Beth-shemesh, and placed it in the house of Abinadab, where it remained twenty years. Then David fetched it, intending to place it in Jerusalem, but the "breach upon Uzzah" deterred him for a time, and it was left in the house of Obed-Edom for three months.

Warned by the punishment which befel Uzzah, David made the Levites remove it into the tabernacle which he had prepared. Amid the rejoicing of thousands, it was borne to its resting place, and left in charge of Asaph. Once more it was removed, but in no irreverent spirit. When David fled from Absalom, Zadok and the Levites carried it outside the city, and David sent it back at once, believing that if he found favour in the eyes of the Lord, He

would bring him back, and show him both the ark and His habitation.

Peace being restored to the land, David's thoughts turned to the ark of the covenant, which remained under curtains, while he dwelt in a house of cedars. Then followed the proposal to build the temple, delayed, however, until Solomon's days. The temple completed, the ark was once more removed, with increased honour. Great rejoicings attended its removal, and here in its gorgeous Holy of Holies, it remained until the idolatrous kings of Judah profaned the temple by putting idols in the Holy Place itself, when the Levites seem to have removed it from place to place, until the better times of Josiah arrived. He commanded them to replace it in the temple which Solomon had built, but what eventually became of it, we do not know. Doubtless when Judah was carried into captivity, it was either carried away or destroyed. "They took all the holy vessels of the Lord, with the vessels of the Ark of God, and carried them away unto Babylon." Well might they lament, saying, "Our rejoicing is at an end, the light of our candlestick is put out, the Ark of our covenant is spoiled, our holy things are defiled, and the name that is called upon us, is almost profaned."

Surely this history may contain lessons for us. So long as it was honoured, as in the days of Joshua, so long the Israelites prospered. While it remained in its appointed places it brought blessings to those in whose care it was, as to Abinadab and Obed-edom. But when it was removed from its Shiloh, by impious hands, no after repentance could bring it back. In all its wanderings, and in the many vicissitudes through which it passed, Shiloh saw it no more. And thus it may be with the Gospel. It may, by our negligence, or by our sinfulness be removed, and the candlestick which gave light to us may shine upon us no more.

E. M. C.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS.

"The *Man* Christ Jesus."

There seems evidently a stress laid by the Apostle, in 1 Tim. ii. 5, on the manhood of our Lord. It seems to be connected with the command to Paul to go and try to save every one. "There is one God," he says, "and one Mediator between God and man, the *Man* Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all." So as

there is the same God, the same Mediator, and the same ransom, the command to Paul relates to one man as much as another. The words, "God will have all men to be saved," would be more naturally rendered, "God commandeth all men to be saved," that is, to use the means to save all with which, as an Apostle, he was furnished.

But within and behind this there is another ground for the stress on the word "man;" it relates to reconciliation. I cannot tell how it is exactly, but the offended and the offender seem to have changed places since the olden time in regard to the application of the words "be reconciled," to them. We should naturally think the injured person, who would be the angry person, was the one whom we had to persuade to "be reconciled."

So it is in that pretty epigram attributed to Bible Society Owen, and said to be written at his Inn, in Cambridge, where he had in vain endeavoured to persuade good old Mr. Simeon to forgive some one, without concessions on that side. As it has never appeared in your pages, Mr. Editor, I will insert the lines here:—

"How rare that toil a prosperous issue finds
That seeks to reconcile divided minds.
A thousand quibbles rise at passion's touch;
This yields too little, and *that* asks too much;
Each wishes each with th' other's eyes to see,
And many sinners can't make two agree.
What mediation, then, the Saviour showed,
Who singly reconciled us all to God!"

But, to return to our subject, it is not the offended party, but the offender, who is constantly in Scripture exhorted to be reconciled. Thus, in Matt. xxv. 23, 24, the man who has wronged his brother is told to go his way and "be reconciled to him." Should not we have said, try to get him to be reconciled to you? And, omitting other Scripture examples, there is that exhortation in the Communion Service, flowing in the same strain, and taking the same side,—"And if ye shall perceive that your offences are against your neighbours, then ye shall reconcile yourselves unto them," not them unto you.

Now this, of course, can mean no more than that you should do your part to procure the return of amity. If you have wronged your brother, you are to make restitution—if you have slandered him, you are to confess it with sorrow, and try to counteract the ill effects of it. All this is very plain, however remarkable or otherwise may be the change of the address. But will not a due notice of the fact throw light upon those passages of Scripture in which our reconciliation to God is spoken of? Thus in 2 Cor. v. 20, where it is said. "be ye reconciled to God;" if this change be allowed for, we shall see

that we cannot infer that God is not purposing to punish the impenitent, for it is still true that "He is angry with the wicked every day;" although every day that life is spared, is, through the Mediator's atonement, a day of grace.

Now, bring this view of things to bear on the emphatic word "man"—"the *man* Christ Jesus." Here is an offending world—here is that human world represented by and in the person of one man—one human being. He, then, as the representative of all gives His free life, full submission, and unreserved and dutiful obedience, to God the offended Majesty, in the place of all. *Man* cannot do more to express contrition for the past, or to make restitution, or to *undo* what has been done than this. What remains then? Why that every one, individually, should become a party to the transaction, by penitence, and faith in that Mediator; as it is written "He that believeth hath *set to his seal* that God is true."

Is not this the import of the exhortation, "Be ye reconciled to God?"

To the objection that there is nothing in the Scriptures, of God being reconciled to man, but only the converse, the answer then is, "How can there be?" God has never wronged the world—it is the world which has cast off God. How gracious, that it should have an opportunity to return! And what if "we neglect so great salvation?" G. A. S.

Tenby.

The Teacher in his School.

ADDRESS ON EZEKIEL'S VISION OF THE DRY BONES.

SHALL I tell you a very wonderful dream a man once had? He thought that he went out of the town in which he lived, and walked on and on till he found himself in a valley amongst the mountains, and this valley was full of bones—numbers of dry bones. What bones could they be? They were human bones, the bones of dead men. Not a sign of life was there, though once those bones had been clothed with flesh, and each body had been the dwelling-place of a living soul.

As he looked on the sad sight, a voice fell on his ear that must have filled him with awe—a voice that you and I never heard yet, though one day we too shall listen to it. Yes, GOD said to him, "Can these dry bones live?" And when he answered, truly, that

God alone knew, he was bidden to call, in God's name, on these dry bones, that they might live. What a wonderful change! The bones join together,—the muscles, the flesh, the skin, all seem to spring out of nothing,—and there before him lie the perfect bodies of a multitude of men. Ah, but they are *lifeless* bodies! Not one stirs, not one breathes, not one is conscious. Once more he is bidden, and he calls on the four winds of heaven to come and breathe on the dead bodies. He obeys, and LIFE comes back. Each body receives the precious gift; it moves, it speaks; and the valley, just now so silent, desolate, and mournful, seems all astir with a living host.

Such was the dream, and you know who saw it—Ezekiel. He lived in the dark, troubled days of the children of Israel, when all their prosperity seemed lost, and their state hopeless. And by this vision God comforted him, by showing that He could, and would, in His own time, restore them.

I look around me here, and see no such vision. Bright eyes, warm hands, living bodies; no such sad sight as dead bodies, or dry bones. Health, strength, activity, all are signs of life. But think a moment. Have you never heard of such a thing as a DEAD HEART? Remember that touching story of the prodigal son. What a home he had! what a tender, loving father! what comforts! We wonder how he could ever leave that home, or grieve that father. How could he? Why, he did not FEEL that love, nor value his father's goodness. If I say that his HEART was DEAD, shall I not be right? He might be strong, active, full of spirits, fond of sports and enjoyments, such as suited him; but his heart, that should have been warm with loving gratitude for such kindness as was shown to him, was cold and DEAD. His one desire was to get away from his father's eye, to get where his father's hand could not reach or control him, to be independent; he was careless of the grief such conduct would bring on that loving heart. A full, rich, generous, trusting love was shown to him, and he repaid it with unfilial neglect, and even rebellion. CAN THESE DRY BONES LIVE?

Wait a while, till wicked companions and sinful pleasures fail him when most in need. Helpless, hopeless, he is just perishing in all the hardness of his heart, when, lo! the Spirit from Heaven, as unseen as the wind, and as free, and infinitely more mighty, breathes on the dead heart, and HE LIVES. Now, his heart longs to be reconciled to his Father. With faint and weary steps he turns homeward—grief shame, humiliation, struggling in his soul, but not DESPAIR! He knows his Father too well for that. And soon, in that Father's arms he *loves* and *lives*. "This my son WAS DEAD and is ALIVE again."

Are there dead hearts here? Oh if I could but be sure that there

was not one! If I dared to hope that every one here was alive unto God, were that life ever so weak and feeble, so that it were but real! But do not some consciences whisper, "I too am dead; for though I hear about the love of Christ, my heart never turns to Him, never beats with love to Him! I live on His mercy, but I have no return of thankfulness and service to make!" Oh what a sad confession! Can such dry bones—such dead hearts—live? Indeed they can—and your teacher's prayer and earnest desire, is "Come from the four winds, O Spirit of the living God, and breathe on these dead hearts, that they may live."

For this, we look, and long, and pray, and wait. It is not God's will that your hearts should be so cold—nor that whilst you have a name to live you should be dead. Seek for yourselves, as we for you, that you may awake and arise from the dead. Seek for yourselves that you may LIVE now, and you shall live for ever.

E. G. F.

SKETCH OF AN ADDRESS, ON REV. XXI. 5.

"Behold I make all things new."

WHOSE words were these? And when were they spoken? The heavens and the earth that we now live on, firm and lasting as they seem, will come to an end. St. John in a vision foresaw that terrible day of the Lord—saw heaven and earth pass away—and then heard these words.

I have three especial things to speak of, that will be new.

I. A new home.

II. A new body.

III. A new heart.

God will bring about all these—and WHY?

1. A NEW HOME. What sort of a world is this? God made it. And when first it came from His hand, it was perfect in beauty—all things that God had made were "very good." How short a time that beauty lasted! How soon SIN entered into the world, and brought with it a curse! Disease, decay, destruction, make themselves visible in the midst of the lovely scenes around us. St. Paul speaks of the "whole creation" as in bondage, and the whole creation cannot mean less than all the earth and its many tribes of inhabitants. At times earth is clothed with beauty—but the blight, the storm, the worm, the winter, tell of some sad change that has

passed over it since God pronounced it very good. It needs a change if it is ever again to bear that description.

II. A NEW BODY. Is that necessary? David said, as he looked at his own body, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Look at your hands, for instance. The fingers, the joints, the skin, the veins. Feel the muscles; what strength! yet what lightness! what an easy motion! Or look at a little child's face—the fair complexion, the soft curling hair, the bright eyes! Are there here any signs of a curse? Any need for renewal? That is a question you can all answer. One need not go so far as a hospital. The first street, or lane, or court, would bring the answer. We should find it by the bedside of some one wasting away under disease, or suddenly struck down by an accident. Pain, decay, death! Yes, we do indeed need a new body!

III. A NEW HEART. If the body be wonderful, much more is the soul. I wish you would all think a little more of your own powers of mind. The memory, the judgment or reason, the imagination, the affections. How much we can do! How many wonders we can discover, of heaven above or earth beneath! Are there any signs of decay here? any need for renewal? Yes, indeed! only think of yourselves, the way in which sin and ignorance injure the soul. Not only can evil temptations from without attack you, but you know also that there is evil WITHIN: a readiness to yield to temptation, a love of evil. The imagination, the judgment, the reason, the affections, all are spotted, as it were, with sin—all SPOILT! YES, BUT ALL WILL BE CHANGED: and by Him whose Almighty power first created the heavens and the earth and all therein.

A NEW HOME: and that so bright, so rich, so glorious, that all the world has now that is beautiful and delightful is used to paint the picture of the new heavens and new earth. (Refer to details in Rev. xxi. xxii). And there will neither be storm to ruffle, nor blight to spoil—no decay, no destruction, no death! Who can imagine the glory of that new home?

A NEW BODY: called from the grave by the power of God's voice. A change will have passed over it that we believe, and hope, and long for, but cannot imagine. Not only will death be gone for ever, but all pain, all disease, all suffering, all wounds, all accidents will be past, and FORGOTTEN! What untold pleasure, what unknown delight! THE PERFECT REST!

A NEW HEART—a new glorified spirit—new, not as being any other than ourselves, but RENEWED; and so pure, so holy, so like our own Lord Himself, that not a thought of sin will ever stain it—no nor even any temptation from without ever come near it! You that have mourned, again and again, over your sins and folly,

your wanderings from God, try to think what a blessing it will be TO SIN NO MORE. And not only to do or suffer no evil, but to have the power to do God's will perfectly—to know Him more fully and clearly—to see, not through a glass darkly, but face to face!

These changes will be SUDDEN and COMPLETE. The new body joined to the new spirit, will enter its new home to go no more out for ever! But remember one thing. Two of the changes must wait for the last day; but one, the third, MUST BE BEGUN now on earth. When heaven and earth are passing away, it will then be too late to seek God's renewing grace. COME NOW, and ask for that new heart that longs, and waits, and prepares for its future happiness. He will hear your prayer, and He can make all things new!

J. G. F.

ADDRESSES ON OUR LORD'S INVITATIONS.

I. MATT. XI. 28—30.

"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

MY Dear Children,

MANY amongst you, to whom I speak from Sunday to Sunday, I know have to labour during the other six days of the week; and therefore many amongst you, young as you are, have already learnt from experience that God's Word is true, and "that in the sweat of his face," man must eat bread. Thus, knowing the weariness of toil, you can better understand the value of rest for you have found the truth of the wise king of Israel's words in Eccl. v. 12, where he tells us "That the sleep (or rest) of a labouring man is sweet."

But, dear children, it is of a far higher than any earthly rest that our Saviour is speaking in the sweet words which I have chosen for our address. This precious promise refers to *spiritual* rest; and by spiritual rest I mean words on which we may allow our minds to dwell, and our hearts to trust without fear of the promise they hold out ever vanishing away. Some of you are old enough to have heard these "comfortable words" used in our solemn Communion service, where they are well placed, as being spoken by the Church's Head, and specially applicable in that act of worship which brings her as near as she can come, whilst yet on earth, to her Saviour's presence. Sweet thoughts on this spiritual rest, do these "comfortable words" suggest to the minds of all who from time to time, with meek hearts and true faith, approach their Master's table; but as *all* of you are not yet old enough to have had that privilege, and I must speak to the *many*, it is not on this

part of the subject I intend to dwell to-day.

Rest in Christ, the youngest among us shall find on going to Him; and how gladly He welcomes children, we learn from the special invitation He has given them in Luke xviii. 16, which might be written in letters of gold—"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." What is the meaning of rest? It is just the opposite of labour, which is the inevitable lot of every creature on earth, and weariness the inseparable result of that lot. The thought of rest may, and does sweeten the time of toil, which none of those who are occupied day by day in the business of life will be disposed to deny is a severe penalty; and none but those thus occupied, can tell how eagerly the evening hours are looked forward to.

Man labours whilst on earth; he is indeed heavy laden with cares and sorrows, trials and temptations; how bright to those whose eyes the Saviour hath opened, seems in the distance the *rest* that remaineth, a rest which the Apostle tells us is in some slight degree anticipated or entered into by those who believe even whilst on earth, Heb. iv. 3. How full is the Bible of this blessed word *Come!* and let us consider

1st. *The guests.* Who are invited? *The weary.* How large a class are these to whom the Saviour is speaking, and how priceless the boon He offers! In Isaiah l. 4, He tells us He has a special word to the weary—surely the promise held out is indeed a "word in season," and as Solomon says in Prov. xv. 23, how good it is! On earth, dear children, God's people are strangers and pilgrims, they are like the children of Israel passing through the wilderness to the Promised Land. Weary, how weary, the Jews must have been of those forty years incessant journeyings, we may gather from Num. xxi. 4. It had been a long way; now they lacked water, then they wearied of their heavenly food; many and cruel foes had to be encountered, dangers had to be passed; yet through all their various difficulties they had the *visible* presence of their Saviour with them, and ought not to have been "discouraged." We, dear children, are in many ways like them; the "way" or road to our heavenly rest is "narrow," and the gate wherein we enter "strait" (Matt. vii. 14); and often, as we journey, we are disquieted, cast down, and constantly discouraged by some trial which we fancy too heavy to be borne, or dismayed at some difficulty too great to be overcome, till like the Jews of old we "speak against God."

2nd. *The conditions of the invitation.* These are threefold. 1st. *Going to Jesus.* 2nd. *Taking His yoke.* 3rd. *Learning of Him.*

1st. *Going to Jesus.* There is but *one* way to do this *now*, dear children,—in prayer. And in this blessed mode of approaching Him, His own people find the truth of that parting promise in Matt. xxviii. 20. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

2nd. *Taking His yoke.* This, dear children, is a remarkable expression. Some of you may not even know what a yoke is. It is an implement formerly used to attach animals to whatever they had to draw. The word is frequently employed in Scripture as a type of bondage or slavery, Lev. xxvi. 13, Deut. xxviii. 48, Is. ix. 4. It is therefore a most fit illustration to make use of, as an emblem of binding us in any way; and in these loving words our dear Redeemer offers His yoke in the place of Satan's. Satan's yoke is *hatred*, that hatred which the carnal mind feels for all that is pure and holy, and thus Satan binds fast upon us the sins which we prefer to the Saviour's yoke, which is *love*,—love so unchangeable and everlasting as to render the burden He places upon us, which is doing His

will and serving Him, easy and light. Satan is a hard taskmaster; dear children, accept the services of that gracious Master, who has borne and still bears with us the burden and heat of the day (Is. lxiii. 9); who sends no sorrow, wounding us in just the tenderest part, for which He does not supply the balm, Jer. viii. 22; nor suffers the furnace of affliction, through which His people must pass, to be heated with sevenfold unwonted heat, but that, as in time of old, He is with them, Dan. iii., assisting them to bear the fire which is needed to purify them from the evil which clings to them, till they at last come forth, and like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the smell of fire does not remain upon them, nor is a hair of their head singed. Surely the yoke is easy, the burden light!

3rd. *Learning of Him.* And when Jesus bids us do this, He gives us the reason why. He is meek and lowly in heart; and humility, dear children, is the great lesson we all have to learn; nor can we have a higher example of this virtue than in Him, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor. The Apostle bids us let this mind be in us, Phil. ii. 5—12. Dear children, humility is the foundation of obedience. Because He was humble, Jesus was obedient; and this perfect work, which He commenced as a child in His obscure home at Nazareth, Luke ii. 51, He continued through His public life, till in the garden of Gethsemane, though "His agony and bloody sweat" almost overcame Him, —He said, "Not my will but Thine be done," Luke xxii. 42. His simple life of holy obedience was over on Calvary; He said, "It is finished," John xix. 30. Man can add nothing to that work; Christ's earthly course, whilst it stands out in bright relief to that of every other man, is still "so high that we cannot attain to it," we can but ask for that Divine grace of humility to walk in His light.

Pride is of the earth, or I should almost say of hell. We see it clearly exhibited in the garden of Eden, when Eve takes the forbidden fruit, Gen. iii. 5, 6; nor is the fatal act undone till the *second* Adam came, and when tempted more sorely than the first, replies to every stroke of the arch enemy, with no weapon of His own but with the sword of His Father's Spirit,—"It is written."

The wise man Solomon speaks much against *pride*, Prov. viii. 13; xvi. 18; xxix. 23; and highly exalts *humility*, xv. 33: xviii. 12; xxii. 4. The prophets also left a warning voice against this sin, Is. xxiii. 9; Jer. l. 30, 31; Dan. iv. 37; v. 20; and exhort to follow the opposite virtue, Is. ii. 11; lvii. 15. In Luke ix. 46—48, our Saviour speaks on the subject, and setting a little child in the midst of His disciples, illustrates to them in what estimation His followers ought to hold themselves.

A last reason I would give you, dear children, for being humble is from what God tells us in Is. lvii. 15. He promises to dwell with the humble, and is not this a boon worth securing? Nor can pride have any entrance into heaven.

The *preparation* to accept this invitation is from the Saviour. Because He knew we could not of ourselves ever go to Him, therefore He came on earth causing the *lame to walk*.

In Is. xxxv. 3, it is foretold of Him that He should "confirm the feeble knees," and in the 5th and 6th verses of the same chapter, the very miracles that He is recorded in the Gospel as performing, Luke vii. 22, are predicted of Him. In John v. 1—9, we have a striking illustration of this "preparation of the heart, and answer of the tongue," being both from the Lord. Thirty and eight years of heart-sickening disappointments and delay had the impotent man there spoken of to undergo, as preparation for the

Saviour's gracious question, "Wilt thou be made whole?" With what ecstasy must he have heard the words—"Rise, take up thy bed and walk." Dear children, the same loving voice still says to the youngest among you, "Wilt thou be made whole?" and still pleads in solemn earnest tones of entreaty, "Come unto Me."

Will you not accept the invitation, and go to Him; you need not fear to be disappointed in doing so, for He who gives it is never *weary*, Is. xl. 28—31.

S. B.

NOTES OF A LESSON ON EPHESIANS IV. 17—34.

THE Church of Ephesus was planted by St. Paul, Acts xix. The first bishop of Ephesus was Timothy. This Epistle was written to the Ephesians by St. Paul while he was a prisoner at Rome, because he preached to the Gentiles. St. John afterwards warned the Church at Ephesus because they had left their first love.

Chief Lesson.—The marked difference in conduct to be observed between Christ's *true* disciples and the children of the world.

Verse 17. "Therefore," that is to say (referring to the beginning of the chapter) having one God and Father, calling themselves Christians, and being members of Christ's body, they should not *dishonour* their *profession*. *Life* is compared to a walk, Colossians iii. 7. As by the direction of a walk, you can tell where a person is going, so by a man's life you can tell to *which end* he is bound: see that *you* walk in "the narrow way."

V. 18, 19. See man's awful state by nature, dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. ii. 1, Gen. vi. 5, Matt. xv. 19. Sin has produced a moral blindness, Isaiah xlii. 7, it has defaced that image of God in the soul, in which man was originally created.

V. 20, 21. Those who with *true* purpose of heart profess to be Christ's disciples, seek to *learn* of Him, and to follow His example, and make His life their rule of action, 1 Pet. ii. 21. John x. 27. They must not expect all at once to be rid of sin; sanctification is a gradual work, and they often fall through the weakness of their nature; but, as surely as the magnetic needle points to the north, though it is subject to perturbations and variations from external causes, so likewise is it with all who have true life in their souls, their faces will be stedfastly set heavenward, though, through temptations, they sometimes go astray to the right or to the left.

V. 22. "The old man." That sinful and corrupt nature which is our birthright, with its affections and pleasures, Titus iii. 3. The pleasures of sin are deceitful, they promise much, but are as empty as a bubble. It is the desire of Christ's people to subdue this tendency more and more.

V. 23, 24. By the new man is meant that new principle, producing new desires and affections, implanted by the Holy Spirit, whose work it is to restore the image of God in the soul Col. iii. 10, Titus iii. 5. See some marks of the Spirit by which to examine yourselves; in Gal. v. 22, 23.

V. 25. Lying does not only consist in denying the truth, but in deceiving, or in keeping back a part of the truth, see the awful example of Ananias and Sapphira; all are members of Christ and therefore of one another.

V. 26. This probably means a righteous indignation at sin, as that of Moses

who broke the two tables of stone in his wrath; Ex. xxxii. 19, but it cannot possibly mean that passion may be indulged in, *that* being contrary to the whole spirit of Christianity.

V. 27. If we relax in *our* prayerfulness and watchfulness, Satan is always on the watch, and we shall fall a prey to his temptations, 1 Peter, v. 8.

V. 28. Stealing forbidden. It is contrary to the injunction "do unto all men, as you would they should do unto you." Idleness forbidden, 1 Thess. iv. 11. God does not call all to high positions in his Church; in the service of the Temple, there were some "hewers of wood, and drawers of water" Josh. ix. 27. God chooses to be served by each one in the performance of his *daily duty*, whatever it may be. All have not money to give away, but all can give prayers for those that need.

V. 29. Light and idle conversation forbidden. How much better it would be, if when you are sitting at work with your companions, instead of unprofitable and often wicked conversation, you were to talk of Christ's love to sinners! You might then be building up yourself and might also be the means of causing some to think seriously who had never done so before, particularly if your conduct carries out what you say.

V. 30. The thought that our bodies are the "temples of the Holy Ghost" should surely make us watchful not to profane His temple, lest we should provoke Him to leave us. 1 Cor. vi. 19.

V. 31. Sins of the tongue to be particularly watched against; if indulged in they bring much dishonour on Christ's religion, and cause ungodly men to scoff. James iii. 6.

V. 32. The whole spirit of the gospel is love. God's love in Christ is our highest motive for action; we can never have so much to forgive others, as we want ourselves to be forgiven by God.

APPLICATION. The important question for you to consider is whether *you* have put off the old man, and put on the new man? Or at least, do you *desire* to do so?

The Holy Spirit alone can enable you to do this: have you sought His help?

And if so, are you seeking daily to copy Christ's example?

NOTES OF A LESSON FOR A TESTAMENT CLASS.

MATT. XVIII. 1—14.

THE verses read in turn by the children, ages from six to twelve. After a verse or two has been read, the teacher reads them again, and questions the class in turn in the following manner (children answering without looking at the passage).

Verses 1 & 2.—Who came to Jesus? To whom did the disciples come? What did they ask? Who did Jesus call? &c., &c.

So on to the end of the passage.

Then follows the explanatory part of the Lesson, of which the following are the notes;—

(It must be understood that the words *in italics* are lessons taught orally to all the children at once, and required to be repeated by them the next week. One of these Lessons ought always to be a Scripture text.)

Verse 1.—Notice the dispute which

led to this question being asked. What is this feeling called, of wanting to be first? (Pride.) Mark ix. 33. Is it right or wrong? *It is wrong to want to be first.*

Verses 2—4.—Do you not think those grown-up men must have been very much surprised to be told to copy that little child? What were they to copy in that little child? Its humility—thinking little of itself. Suppose there should be little children who are not humble, but think a great deal of themselves, would they not be worse than proud grown-up people? *Children, and grown-up people too, must think little of themselves.*

Verses 6 & 7.—Offend—lead them wrong. See what a dreadful thing it is to lead those younger than ourselves wrong (mention younger brothers and sisters). *It is better to be drowned in the sea than to lead a little child wrong.*

Verses 8 & 9.—Anything we are very fond of, as our hand or eye. Go without it. *Better lose pleasure now than lose heaven bye-and-bye.* Think of this when we see something looking nice, but not ours; or want to play when we ought to be at work. Think, "what good will it do us when we are dying?"

Verse 10.—We are not to despise any one; not little children, for God watches over them. His angels watch over them, and we shall be punished if we use them ill, and blessed if we use them well (see verse 5).

Verse 11.—Not to despise even bad people or naughty children; Jesus came to die. Whom for? Good people? And are we so very good ourselves?

Verses 12 & 13.—Describe shepherd. Sheep soon lost. Can't get back. Does shepherd say "never mind; it was a bad sheep to go away; I will leave it alone?" Did Jesus say so? No; He took great pains—gave His life for the bad sheep. Jesus is pleased when the sheep is brought back. When are bad people and naughty children like this sheep?

Verse 14.—No one is too little for God to care about; if God does not despise us, how wrong it must be of us to despise one another!

"*Let each esteem others better than themselves.*" E. B.

ILLUSTRATION.

In a mill where the machinery is all driven by water, the working of the whole machinery depends upon the supply of water. Cut off that supply, and the machinery becomes useless. Let on the water, and life and activity is given to all. The whole dependence is placed upon the outward supply of water: still it is obvious that we do not throw away the machinery through which the power of the water is brought to bear upon the work.

Just so in the believer, the whole man is carried on by the Spirit of God, or he is none of his. The working of every day depends upon the daily supply of the living stream from on high. Cut off that supply, and the understanding becomes a dark and useless lump of machinery; for the Bible says that the unconverted have the understanding darkened. Restore the Divine Spirit, and life and animation is given to all,—the understanding is made a new creature. Now though the whole leaning or dependence here is upon the supply of the Spirit, still it is obvious that we do not cast away the machinery of the human mind, but rather honour it far more than the world does.—*McCheyne.*

NOTES OF LESSONS ON THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE, FOR SENIOR CLASSES.

THE series of Lessons which we now propose to lay before our readers, is intended solely for Senior Classes, and must be judged only by its adaptation to that important division of our schools. Such classes, in a well-managed school, will have gained a fair knowledge of the leading events of Scripture History, of the principal characters described, and the general nature of the Truths thus revealed and enforced. But it will often be found that they have gained their knowledge (or at least possess it) in a desultory shape, and without the valuable connecting links that bind the various parts of the Sacred Volume in one harmonious whole.

We do not, for a moment, contend that such a partial knowledge of the Word of God is not sufficient for salvation. The chief truths of the Gospel are such, and so expressed, that children may receive them intelligently; and the mouths of babes and sucklings have many a time, by God's grace, yielded perfected praise. But it is equally clear, from many passages in that Volume itself, that we are bound to "go on unto perfection," and to pass from the "children's food" to "strong meat"; or at least, ALL are called on to seek to GROW not only "in grace," but "in the knowledge of our Lord," and therefore of all Truths pertaining to His kingdom. And one way to accomplish this, undoubtedly, is to study the Bible, thoroughly and entirely; not confining ourselves to favourite passages or favourite Books, but seeking the whole truth there revealed.

We wish, then, to lead and to assist our friends to take a wider range of Scripture for their Senior Classes, and to bring about, as we and they may be able, a more comprehensive and intelligent grasp of Divine Revelation, as there presented to us. Each book differs, in some respect, from the rest, either in its authorship, period, nature, style, or design; at least there are but few of the entire sixty-six that can be treated together. Some even carry their peculiar character so far as that we can view them as displaying (not in an exclusive, but) in a prominent manner some one Attribute of the Almighty, or else some one Divine purpose.

It will, of course, be impossible to give these Lessons in school in the ordinary form of reading lessons; the class will rather be led to fall back on memory, or rest on copious references, for the facts and doctrines contained in the Bible. This, we believe, will prove a profitable mode of passing over the range of subjects; and we humbly trust that the result may be, not only extended knowledge, but deeper convictions and impressions, and a corresponding increase in the influence of truth on the hearts and lives of both teachers and taught.—[EDITORS.]

NOTES OF LESSONS ON THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE.

The Book of Genesis.

The Book of Job is probably the most ancient writing now extant. But that Book which describes Creation naturally claims the first place, and our first attention. Its Author, Moses, a man of eminent learning (nursed in the Court of Egypt, then the most highly cultivated nation), received from God those truths contained in it which no human being could have acquired by himself: comp. Job xxxii. 8; Dan. ii. 22; 2 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Peter i. 21. And in this wonderful Revelation we may be said to find an epitome, or miniature of all the rest of the Bible. Creation, the Fall, Redemption through a future Messiah, the Institution of the Sabbath, and of Sacrifices, the choice of a peculiar nation, and of a peculiar land—all these are to be traced here, interwoven with the beginnings of National History, and the quiet scenes of domestic life.

The nature of the Book is purely historical. Let us refer to the following divisions of its histories, and see where each begins and ends. The Creation of the World: ch. i., ii.; the Creation, and Fall of Man, ch. ii., iii.; the narrative of Cain and Abel, ch. iv.; the Flood, its causes and results, ch. vi.—ix.; the separation of men into Nations, in spite of their attempt to keep together (ch. xi. 4), ch. x., xi; the choice and call of Abram, and the personal history of that Patriarch and his descendants down to Joseph, ch. xii.—l. These matters occupy (according to Hebrew Chronology) a period of more than 2,900 years. Some of them are related in very brief terms—others with minute details; and reflection will convince us that, in this varied treatment of the different topics, the aim (if we may reverently say so) has been to enlarge on such scenes as have the most direct bearing on Christian life and character, rather than on events of much greater magnitude, but of less personal influence. The pattern of a godly life, in men like Abraham, is more directly influential than the story of Creation; one teaches us to adore—the other how to live.

What leading idea may we take as a guide through the Book? It is a History of Preparations, *i.e.*, of Divine wisdom preparing for certain events, by Almighty power. Then we may chiefly learn to wonder at and adore God's Providence or foreseeing—and His wisdom in fore-arranging.

Let us follow out this idea. Earth is prepared as man's home: stored with all he can need. Man himself is prepared to glorify God, created, endowed and instructed so to serve and worship His Creator (Ps. cxxxix.). He falls! but a Saviour is prepared to appear in due time, but with such clear promises of His coming that Patriarchs in faith beheld Him and rejoiced (John viii. 56): thus from the very Fall began the process of Restoration, to be completed in the new heavens and earth: Rev. xxi.

Again, a chosen nation is prepared to be guardians of the truth—and through all vicissitudes they are preserved for a prepared country.

The minor incidents also are full of this Providence.

The practical use may then well be to adore and to trust in Him who reigneth, and who seeks the happiness of His people.

The Book of Exodus.

Moses having in the Book of Genesis described the creation of the world, the origin of nations, and the peopling of the earth, now in the second Book of the Pentateuch, called Exodus (a Greek word derived from the Septuagint version signifying "departure") proceeds to detail the commencement and nature of the Jewish Church and Polity—that Theocracy in which Jehovah appears not merely as their Creator and God, but as their King.

Hence this book, totally distinct in character from Genesis, is not purely historical, but contains, with those that follow it, laws for the regulation of the moral conduct of the Israelites, the rites and ceremonies of their religious worship, and also judicial and political laws relating to government and civil life.

Exodus comprehends the history of the nation in its first national existence for a period of about 145 years, from the death of Joseph to the erection of the Tabernacle. Three periods, separated each by forty years, are especially marked:—the birth of Moses, his first attempt at delivering Israel, and his return to accomplish it after forty years' exile. In the description of the oppression of the people in Egypt, the birth of Moses, his preparation for his great office (ch. ii.—vi.), the deliverance of the Israelites by miracle, and the destruction of their enemies (vii.—xiv), their entrance into the wilderness, and the miraculous provision made for their guidance and support (xv.—xvii.), we see how God's *will* was proclaimed and opposed, but nevertheless perfectly carried out. The multiplication of the people could not be prevented by human resistance—while the providence of God is wondrously shown in leading the daughter of the obstinate and hard-hearted Pharaoh, to bring up him who should deliver Israel from Egyptian tyranny:—the divine commission given to Moses was accompanied with gifts of power by which he was enabled to fulfil it:—while the very plagues of Egypt, by making the idols of Pharaoh the medium of his chastisement, and the effect of these judgements in compelling him to let the people go, are all manifestations of the truth that God's will *must* be accomplished, for the Lord is King; Ps. ii. On the other hand the deliverance of the Israelites is a wonderful proof of the truth, power, and goodness of God towards them:—for when giving them His will, He also provided for obedience to it by miraculous interpositions of many sorts, and afterwards at Sinai fully declared His purposes to them.

The second part of the book (ch. xviii.—xl.), opens before us the elements of Divine worship:—prayer and praise, sacrifice, devotedness, and acceptance (manifested by the glory of the Lord) are prominent; while we cannot fail to see in the ceremonial law, a "shadow of good things to come." The Israelites in the wilderness were a type of the Church in the world; Moses, Aaron, the Paschal Lamb, the Manna, the Rock in Horeb, the Tabernacle and the mercy-seat were immediate types of Christ, the true High Priest and Prophet of the Church, the Sacrifice for Sin, the Bread of life, the giver of the Holy Spirit (who is the Living Water), the real and only mediator, the Incarnate word, in whose human nature (the true Tabernacle) dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Illustrations of man's sin and weakness run through the whole book. In the obstinacy of Pharaoh, in the murmurings, disobedience, and rebellion of the Israelites, are seen the depravity of man by nature. In Moses we see the change which divine grace produces in man; and in his intercessions for the people we learn how, by *our* Mediator, blessings may be obtained and wrath turned away from us.

A practical lesson of great value is taught in this book:—how we may safely rely on God's promises, which will surely be accomplished notwithstanding all opposition, provided the condition on which they are given,—heartfelt obedience to His will,—is fulfilled in us.

The Book of Leviticus.

This Book, written by Moses, is probably so called because it principally contains laws concerning the sacrifices and ordinances, the charge of which was especially committed to the Tribe of Levi for fulfilment. It is not an historical book, there is no biography in it, and the only incidents it contain are the consecration of Aaron and his sons, and the priests, ch. viii., the fatal error of Nadab and Abihu, ch. x., and the stoning of the blasphemer, ch. xxiv.; the first showing the importance God attaches to his worship; the second the sinfulness of those who interfere with it, without divine appointment; and the last, the awful danger of taking God's holy name in vain.

Besides the Ceremonial laws contained in this book, there are, however, Moral laws of great and permanent power, and lasting obligation. The rites of religious worship, for which rules are given, are—the Sacrifices, all of which had a typical reference to Christ, and especially to His atonement: Purification from legal uncleanness, by which moral purity was taught, as well as the distinct and separate character of the people maintained; and various solemn Festivals instituted to promote true religion among the whole of the people, and to inspire them with reverence for God.

It is a book, also, of Types and Shadows, the very best comment and explanation upon it being furnished by the epistle to the Hebrews. Guided by this interpretation, we see in the High Priest of the Jews, the type of the great High Priest of the Christian dispensation; the sacrifices offered on the Jewish altar foreshadowed the one sacrifice of Christ upon the cross; the Jewish leper, too truly represented the depraved and morally polluted race of mankind; the scape-goat personified Him upon whom God has laid the iniquity of us all; the splendid festivals of the Jewish Church concealed, under an outward covering, the spiritual radiance of the Gospel ordinances; the services of the Great Day of atonement find their substance and reality in the Cross of Christ, Heb. ix.; and the Jewish Jubilee typifies the whole period of the Gospel dispensation, Isa. lxi. 2.

As we read the code of sacrificial, civil, ceremonial and judicial laws contained in this book, we cannot fail to be impressed with the purity of their morality, and the wisdom, justice and beneficence of their Divine Author. These attributes, combined with those of holiness, majesty and glory, encircled by wondrous love, contrast powerfully with the guilt, ignorance, weakness, and mortality of mankind, to whom they were given; yet happily they point continually not only to the necessity but to the provision of an atonement, and exhibit the state of excellence to which the grace and mercy of the Creator have destined the human soul to be raised.

We might wonder that such a Being as the God who is thus revealed to us could care for such unworthy creatures. Here is His answer to such a doubt:—"Come to me, but come in my own appointed way." And what is that way? By confession of sin, and contrition for it, accepting by faith the appointed atonement, and obedience to the law. And what are the results? See the blessing offered to them that keep the commandments, ch. xxvi. 3—13, and the promises to those who repent in v. 40—46. In the history of the chosen people, more of temporal results attending the faithful service of God may be seen, than with the world now; but the broad features still remain,—the wicked will perish, the righteous are safe.

All can now go to God, but they must seek him in his appointed way (John xiv. 6). "Have I thus come to God?" is an all-important question for each of us.

The Book of Numbers.

The title of this book is derived from the account it contains of *the numberings* of the people of Israel; the first having taken place in the beginning of the second year, the second in the plains of Moab at the conclusion of their journey in the wilderness. But there are many other interesting subjects contained in this book, written, as it would seem from ch. xxxvi. 13, by Moses, in the plains of Moab. It comprehends a period of about thirty-eight years, but most of the events related in it, happened in the first and last of those years: of the greater part of the period, it is, therefore, but a *silent* history.

The numbering of the people, shows how literally the promise of God to Abraham was accomplished, Gen. xv.5, though this promise has also a spiritual fulfilment, Gal. iii. 29; and when we consider the character and conduct of the people, we are reminded of the words of St. Paul, Rom. ii. 28, 29, and taught how inefficient are all blessings and privileges, unless the grace of God be sought and obtained, in order that they may be rightly used.

The other events recorded in this book,—the preparation for, and consecration of the Tabernacle; the offerings of the princes; the encampments of the Israelites, with their eight different occasions of murmuring and punishment; the history of Balaam and Balak; the great rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram against Moses; the unbelieving refusal to enter Canaan; the death of Aaron, but the succession of his sons in the sacred office; the repetition of the principal laws which had before been given to the Israelites, with the addition of some new precepts; and the directions for the division of the land of Canaan, of which the people were about to take possession,—are a series of events, in which everywhere God's astonishing and distinct PROVIDENTIAL HAND is manifestly visible.

On the one side we see it plainly exercised in God's JUDGMENTS against sin, not only towards the heathen, as Sihon and Og, and the Midianites, but towards his chosen people; for by the varied plagues which they provoked the Lord to send upon them, every one of that generation who was twenty years old and upwards when they came out of Egypt, perished in the wilderness, except the faithful Joshua and Caleb.

Yet, on the other hand, the whole narrative displays God's signal GRACE and MERCY; for all through their journeyings He was guiding the people in the right way, and though they were afflicted in the wilderness, yet what miracles He wrought for them, extending his care to each and all! He knows and COUNTS His creatures (Isaiah xx. 26), and although a multitude fall, and lose the blessings He would bestow, by their unbelief and sin, yet a numerous host remains to enter into the promised land, to witness to His shielding and protecting care, and to partake of the bounty he had prepared.

Several striking types of the Gospel times are found, under a veil, in this history. The brazen serpent, ch. xxi. 9, was a striking type of the death of Christ on the cross, John iii. 14. The prophecy of Balaam of "the Star" to come out of Jacob (ch. xxiv. 17), points to the Bright and Morning Star, Rev. xxii. 16, and "the Sceptre" can only belong to Him who is to reign over all, 1 Cor. xv. 25.

Guided by St. Paul (1 Cor. x. 1—14) we are able to learn from it how corrupt, perverse, and foolish is man, and how evil is unbelief and rebellion; we see also the goodness and severity of God, the excellence of submission to the divine will, and the truth, power, and unchangeableness of Jehovah, who knows and guards *each one* of His people, shielding them, if they commit their way to Him, against evil men and spirits, and blessing them with the fulness of His love.

Useful to each one of us is the thought, that if faithful, I as AN INDIVIDUAL amongst millions, am known by God, observed by Him, cared for and shielded, preserved for evermore.

The Book of Deuteronomy.

The name of this book signifies *second law-giving*, because it contains a repetition of the preceding laws given by Moses, and on this account is a book of REMINDERS, with some additions and explanations, to impress the law more forcibly upon the Israelites in general, and especially upon those who, being born in the wilderness, were not present at its first promulgation on Sinai. Moses, now 120 years of age, speaks as an old man about to die, and this book is his parting charge to those whose eternal salvation he earnestly desired, and for whom he felt the greater anxiety from his past experience of what they were, in wilfulness and forgetfulness of God.

There is very little history contained in this book—the recapitulation in the early chapters of the several events which had befallen the Israelites in the wilderness during nearly forty years, and the practical exhortations based upon them, are given by Moses to warn the new generation (then forming almost a new nation) who were gathered around him, of the necessity of fearing, loving, and obeying God. The period embraced in the book is little more than a month, and it is concluded by a short account of the death of Moses, which is supposed to have been added by his successor Joshua, and is said to have been originally the beginning of the book bearing his name.

The wisdom and goodness of God are displayed in the gift of this *repeated* law, and the spiritual commentary accompanying it, for they tend to illustrate the holiness of heart required by the Mosaic law, and explain the purpose of many outward rites (see ch. x. 16; xxx. 6; and Phil. ii. 12, 13). The earnest appeals of the law-giver contained in this book were ordered to be read publicly, to be written upon stones, and copied by their future kings with their own hands, and referred to by all for future guidance.

Nor is the book without its special character as the writings of a prophet. It contains predictions of apostacy, and consequent affliction for the people, until their dispersion (ch. xxviii.); while the remarkable prediction of Christ (ch. xviii. 15—19), is deserving of especial notice, since it describes Him as coming to complete the Mosaic dispensation, see Acts iii. 22, vii. 37; Heb. iii. 5.

The practical instruction contained in this second law is still as useful as it was when first given to God's people. The natural course of human life tends to *efface*, or at least to weaken impressions: while the tendency of the corrupt heart of man is always to put away from the memory that which may remind him of neglect of duty, or reprove him for sin. Hence the need and wisdom of such *renewals* of Divine teaching and warning as God graciously provides, as in this book for the Israelites, so for us in *Days* and in *Providences*, whereby we are recalled to the consideration of God and His law and government, which might otherwise be altogether obliterated from our memory.

Nor can we fail to see that God's government is based on the reward of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked. Although there may be temporary exceptions, the rule laid down by Moses of old—that blessing and prosperity would follow upon conformity to God's will, and judgment and adversity would attend upon rebellion and sin,—is still the Divine rule for all God's creatures, the test by which all will stand or fall, the hope of those who seek Him in His own appointed way, and who have no other source of happiness but dependence on His promise.

Let us then look forward to the day when all will receive their recompense according to what they have done, whether it be good or bad. "There is a God that judgeth," therefore let us fear and trust in Him.

The Book of Joshua.

This is the first of the historical books, strictly so called, since those comprised in the Pentateuch are more or less books of Divine laws. The history contained in this book was written by Joshua, or if not by him at least by a contemporary (see ch. v. 1, and vi. 25), with the exception of the last five verses, giving an account of his death, which were added by one of his successors, probably by Eleazar, Phinehas, or Samuel. It contains a history of about twenty-four years, embracing God's confirmation of Joshua as the successor of Moses—the conquest of Canaan, including the history of Rahab and the two spies,—the division of the conquered country among the different tribes,—the dying address and counsels of Joshua to the people, and their renewal of the covenant.

Thus the Book is one of FULFILMENTS—it records the accomplishment of the Divine promise made to Abraham 476 years before, that his descendants should be established in the promised land, Gen. xv. 13—16; Josh. xxi. 45; xxiii. 14. It assures us of the faithfulness of God; he will prosper his people and punish their enemies,—His Word and truth shall come to pass whoever may oppose it. It is a book of CONQUESTS, too, for it tells of the overthrow of the idolatrous nations of Canaan, by the hand of those who were to possess their land. To be the captain of this host, Joshua was appointed,—for God chooses men of different character to fulfil the several parts of His plan. Pious and obedient, courageous, fearless and persevering, Joshua never was once dismayed by difficulties and dangers which alarmed the people. Faithful in his charge from God, he was alike disinterested in the completion of it. Following implicitly himself the guidance of God, he was a firm and faithful chief to the people, a pattern of a humble and firm believer.

The Israelites in destroying the inhabitants of Canaan, were employed to execute the Divine purpose. God might have punished them in other ways, by hurricanes, earthquakes or pestilence; but he saw fit to do it by the sword of Israel,—an act by which *they* must have been solemnly impressed with the awfulness of the sin of idolatry (Lev. xviii. 26—28). The Lord of all has a right to bestow what earthly gifts He pleases, and to take them away from those who abuse them. Hence when the Canaanites had become utterly sunk in pollution, God's TIME FOR JUDGMENT came, as it does to all who have filled up the measure of their iniquity.

But Canaan was won by the sword: and although it was not by their own might and courage that Israel gained the victory, still it shows us that God's will is to be *done actively*, as well as borne passively—that the strength He gives is to be used, and that we are to be "fellow-workers with Him" in fulfilling His will, and not to expect His purposes to be accomplished by the simple exercise of His power. Wondrously, indeed, was that power exercised in behalf of Israel of old, as recorded here (ch. iii. 11—17; vi. 20—21; x. 10—15); and still does the same wisdom guide the course of events in the world, so as finally to conduce to the safety and success of His people.

Our warfare now is spiritual. The name of Joshua signifies, "He shall save,"—and Christ is our Joshua (His name Jesus, being the same, Heb. iv. 8), for "He shall save His people from their sins," and is "the Captain" of their salvation, (Heb. ii. 10). He leads us to the heavenly Canaan, and with Him for our guide, we are exhorted "to fight the good fight of faith," waging a continual warfare against the powers of evil within and around us, still following Him "who giveth us the victory." Let the destruction of Canaan warn us, too, of the fate which surely will at last overtake the ungodly, when God's *time of judgment* comes: Luke xix. 27.

The Book of Judges.

This Book contains the history of the Israelites from the death of Joshua to the days of Eli, and embraces a period of about 300 years. Its name is derived from the title of *Judges*, given to the thirteen men whom God raised up in times of imminent danger, for the deliverance of his people from their enemies. It does not appear that they ruled in succession, but at intervals, and more than one of them at the same time in different parts of the land. The authorship of this Book is doubtful, but it was probably written by Samuel, the last of the Judges; and it is certain, from ch. i. 21. compared with ii. Sam. v., that it was written before the reign of David.

The consecutive history is contained in ch. i. to xvi. the latter part of the Book, ch. xvii—xxi., belonging in chronological order to a period not long after the death of Joshua, but placed at the end, in order not to interrupt the regular narrative. It describes the interregnum after the death of Joshua; the introduction of idolatry among the people by the idol of Micah and the consequent debasement of many of the Israelites (ch. xvii.—xxi.) the servitude of the eastern tribes under the kings of Mesopotamia and Moab; the deliverance of the western Israelites; the servitude of the northern Israelites under the king of Canaan until their deliverance by Deborah and Barak, and subsequently by Gideon; and the oppression of the people by the Ammonites until delivered by Jephthah, and by the Philistines until rescued by Samson.

In reading the brief history of these several judges, we are not able to estimate their real characters; we only know they were men raised up for especial purposes, and that they acted by an especial commission. It is not from them personally, therefore, that we derive instruction in the study of this Book, so much as from the dealings of God with the people under their rule. We see a country in which dangers and disorder arises from the absence of an appointed magistracy; where "the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked hrough bye-ways" (ch. v. 6) where few prophets were appointed to control the people, and "everyone did that which was right in his own eyes" (ch. xvii. 6.); and we hence learn the value of union founded on religious principles, and the blessings of subjection to civil government. We see the Israelites settled in Canaan, instead of improving their blessings to the glory of God, and their own happiness, plunged into idolatry, and bringing on themselves the severe chastisement of the Almighty. A contest is continued between true religion and superstition, displaying the beneficial effects flowing from the one, and the miseries and evil consequences of the other.

The *long-suffering* of God appears to be the great truth shining amidst these records of early Jewish history. The most signal instances of His justice and mercy are alternately displayed; the people sinned and were punished; they repented and were delivered; renewed offences were followed by renewed chastisement, but in the truth and forbearance of God they were still preserved. We wonder at this long-suffering. Israel, appointed to execute God's sentence upon the idolatrous nations, becomes itself idolatrous, and is no sooner delivered by God's judge from the oppression of their enemies, than it relapses into sin after the judge died (ch. viii. 33—35). Yet did God grieve for the misery of Israel, and wrought mighty deliverances again and again for them. So willing is He to save. Mic. vii. 18—20. Rom. v. 8.

Surely these things are written for our warning: none should *presume*, for God is JUST; none need *despair*, for God is MERCIFUL.

The Book of Ruth.

The touching narrative contained in the four chapters of which this book consists, is one of great beauty and interest, and contrasts, in its simplicity and tenderness, with the stirring and turbulent events recorded in the preceding book, and to which this story properly belongs, since the events described in it occurred in the days "in which the judges ruled" (ch. i. 1.) although the precise period is not stated.

It describes the sojourning and death of Elimelech and his two sons in the land of Moab: the return of his wife Naomi to Bethlehem with his daughter-in-law Ruth; the distress of the one, and the dutiful attachment of the other, founded not merely on natural affection (for that failed in the case of Orpah ch. i. 14) but on religious conviction (v.16); the sorrowful return of the two lonely women to Bethlehem; the tender charity of Boaz to Ruth, as a gleaner in his field, and his acknowledgment of his kindred to her in her adversity. These combine to form a pleasing instance of *religion in social life*, the leading truth which the book is designed to illustrate.

Thus are we taught the providence of God *over individuals*, His watchfulness over those who truly fear Him, and honestly endeavour to fulfil His will. Ruth owed her conversion from heathenism to the true religion, and her admission into the family of the Messiah, to the misfortunes resulting from the famine in Israel, the sin of Elimelech's son in marrying a Moabitess, and her own affliction in becoming in her youth a widow: thus does God over-rule evil by good, and bring prosperity and gladness out of adversity and sorrow to those who decide, as Ruth did, to follow Him in all the guidings of His hand (Ps. cxix. 71). From Naomi's fortitude in her trials, and her tender concern for her daughter-in-law in the midst of her affliction, we learn how to bear the changes of human life to which all are equally exposed with her, and not to suffer our own troubles to exclude sympathy with others from our hearts.

A happier picture of the loving discharge of social duties in the fear of God could scarcely be found than is contained in this brief history, yet it is one of so private a nature that we might wonder at its finding a place in the sacred writings, were it not that it serves another important purpose in the great plan of God. It contains a very striking pre-intimation of the admission of the Gentiles into His church, by recording especially the fact of a Moabitess becoming an ancestor of David the king, from whom the Messiah was to come. It had been foretold to the Jews that the Messiah should be of the tribe of Judah (Gen. xlix. 10), and subsequently to this period that he should be of the family of David (Jer. xxiii. 5); and as that promise was limited to a single family it was highly expedient that it should be shown beforehand that this family was of the tribe of Judah; hence the genealogy contained in this book (ch. iv. 18—22) completed the chain of lineal descent, which in the gospels is continued, to show that Ruth the Moabitess is indeed an ancestor, according to the flesh, of Christ, the son of David. Thus was dimly intimated to God's people of old the great mystery of the gospel, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs with them of God's promises in His Son (Ephes. iii. 6—9), and thus do we receive an additional confirmation of the truth in which we believe.

The practical lessons we may learn from this history are,—the advantage of religion in social life: how mercifully God provides for individual believers in the season of affliction; and how obedience to Him, and filial devotedness, bring with them both temporal and spiritual rewards.

The First and Second Books of Samuel.

The two Books so called, in the Hebrew Canon of Scripture form but one, named after the prophet Samuel, whose history and transactions are related in the first book, and by whom the former part as far as ch. xxiv. was written; the remainder of the first book, and the whole of the second being ascribed to the prophets Gad and Nathan (see 1 Chron. xxix. 29). These books are also called the First and Second Books of Kings, being the beginning of the history of the kings of Israel and Judah.

The first book includes a period of eighty years, and contains the account of the change of government from that of Judges to Kings; describes the birth of Samuel, the destruction of Eli's house, the Israelites desiring a king, and the appointment of Saul to that office; his persecutions of the young David, who is seen, after the sixteenth chapter, conspicuous for piety, valour (as in the case of Goliath), faithfulness, and humanity, in marked contrast to Saul, whose last days, as also those of Samuel are here recorded (ch. xxviii.—xxxi.) The characters brought before us in this portion of the history are strikingly contrasted, and full of suggestive teaching. The weak indulgence of Eli, and the firm piety of Samuel; the rising virtues of David and the sad depravity of Saul; the trials of Eli, Samuel, and David, who through much tribulation passed into the kingdom of heaven, as opposed to the disgrace, misery and death, ensuing upon the sins of Eli's sons, of Saul and Nabal.

The second Book continues the history for nearly the first forty years of David's reign, describing the establishment of his throne, the extinction of Saul's family, and David's grateful kindness to the surviving son of his friend Jonathan; the lamentable fall of David, with his submissive repentance, pardon, and restoration; the melancholy effects of his error, in the crime of Amnon, and the rebellion of Absolom; and his re-establishment on the throne.

In this history of David we have a series of valuable lessons. We see how well he began his reign, using great forbearance towards his enemies, seeking God's direction in every step he took, and showing great concern for the honour of God and the religious welfare of his people. Ps. cxxxii. 4, 5. But soon trouble comes upon him; for even though he be the man after God's own heart, when by his grievous fall he had given occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, he must bear the punishment of his sin. The touching reproof of Nathan melted his heart, (Ps. li. 4.) but to vindicate God's holiness the sword never departed from his house, even though he was assured of final forgiveness, see 2 Sam. xii. 13.; 1 Pet. iv. 18. And when, on his restoration to the throne, he sinned yet again in numbering the people (ch. xxiv.) and thus showed his inclination to put his trust in men rather than God, the sword of the destroying angel only ceased to do its deadly work when the altar of burnt-offering was reared, and the typified Atonement was applied.

The grievous sins of great men are recorded that we may tremble, and take heed lest we fall; and to show us the depth and prevalence of human corruption. Their repentance and recovery display the extent and efficacy of Divine grace; their chastisements teach us the purity of God, who hateth iniquity, and cannot let it go unpunished; and lead us to look to that Saviour in whom alone God's anger can be turned away from the sinner, whose blood can alone efface his guilt, whose Spirit alone can purify his nature, and keep him faithful unto death.

The Books of the Kings and Chronicles.

The two Books of the Kings are supposed to have been arranged in their present form by Ezra, compiled from the records which were regularly kept of all public transactions. These records appear to have been made by the contemporary prophets, and frequently derived their names from the kings whose history they contained. They are thus mentioned in several passages of Scripture (see 1 Kings xi. 41; 2 Chron. ix. 29; xii. 15; xx. 34; xxvi. 22; xxxii. 32).

The Books of Chronicles formed but one in the Hebrew Canon, and were called the Book of Diaries or Journals, while the Septuagint version describes them as "the Books of things omitted." They give a general view of the whole history from the creation to the return from the captivity in Babylon, a period of about 3468 years; a full account of the reigns of David and Solomon; and afterwards chiefly of the kings of Judah, adding many circumstances not before recorded in the Books of Samuel and Kings, and thus being of great importance when studied in connection with them. The genealogies mark precisely the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David, from all of whom it was predicted the Saviour of the world should descend, and also a circumstantial account of the twelve tribes, invaluable to the Jews after their return from the captivity.

In the **First Book** of Kings the history of about 125 years from B.C. 1015, to B.C. 890 is given,—recording the anointing of Solomon, the death of his father David, and the splendour of the kingdom under his rule; the building and consecration of the temple; his subsequent sin and idolatry, his troubles and death (ch. i.—xi.): the division of the twelve tribes in the time of Rehoboam into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah (from which time the ten tribes are called *Israel*, of whom Jeroboam became the first king, and those of the kingdom of Judah are called *Jews)*, and their history to the death of Jehoshaphat (ch. xii.—xxii.).

In the Second Book, the history of the gradual decline of the two kingdoms is continued,—of Israel to the time of its subversion, when the ten tribes were taken captive to Assyria by Shalmaneser B.C., 719, a period of 171 years; and of Judah alone to its subversion and the destruction of the Temple in B.C. 588, when the remaining tribes were taken captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, a period of 131 years.

Glancing at this mournful history, we shall find that *all* the nineteen kings of Israel were idolaters; yet to them and to their people did God send Elijah and Elisha and other prophets, so unwilling was He that any of His rebellious and sinful people should perish. In Judah, the knowledge and worship of Jehovah was more distinctly recognised for a longer period; but of its twenty kings, only Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jotham, Hezekiah, and Josiah, were distinguished for real piety. It was to this people that God sent the chief of the prophets whose writings are contained in subsequent portions of the Sacred Volume.

The *faithfulness and unchangeableness* of God, and the fearful consequences of sin, are strikingly exhibited in this history. His holiness and justice had declared from the beginning that His promises and threatenings would equally be fulfilled; and in the fate of these kingdoms—their prosperity when faithful to God, their downfall when they had forsaken Him—we see the unerring certainty of His Word.

So it will be, as applied to each of us; if we are faithful, *all* His promises will be fulfilled in us; if we fall away, equally will judgment be our portion.

The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

These books embrace a period of a hundred years—have different authors, a Priest and a Ruler—relate different events—and differ in their character, the first being an account of a national return, the second an individual one. But they may well be classed together as having one object. They show the first and partial fulfilment of the many promises of restoration, and the dangers and difficulties that beset the returning nation.

The period of the Captivity was to all the pious Jews (few in number though they were), a time of terrible depression. See Lamentations and Psalms cxxxvii., lxxix., lxxx. But it was God's time for purifying the people; and one sin in particular, that of idolatry, was never known again in Judea. Now the predicted time (Jer. xxv. 12) and the predicted deliverer (Is. xlv. 1) were come, and Israel was to arise.

The instruments were ready. Ezra, pious, patriotic, full of faith, conscientious, tender: Haggai, earnest, outspoken, yet also full of love to his country, urge on the feeble and even faint-hearted Jews who had returned. Then when the work begins to flag, another messenger from God appears. Nehemiah, high in his king's favour, thus possessed of rank and influence, and, above all this, a man of true piety and faith, leaves (like Moses) a court of luxury for an arduous post of toil, to meet with opposition, envy, ingratitude, and bear them all cheerfully, so that Jerusalem may prosper. And NOT IN VAIN. One abuse after another is corrected, one enemy after another silenced, one step after another made good, and the nation stands before us, yet weak, it is true, and partly dependent (politically speaking) on a foreign monarch, but with a rebuilt Capital and Temple, and an acknowledged separate existence, whilst there lay before it a noble future, if it would but be true to its God.

Note, however, the incompleteness of the restoration; for thus we are led to look onward to a yet future and more glorious fulfilment of many promises. Such chapters as Is. lx. await their accomplishment.

And the great lesson is this, gathered from *this* restoration and bearing on the future one—"GOD WILL KEEP HIS OWN." No matter if oppressed by tyrants, opposed by envious foes, weakened by false, pretended friends, nor, worse still, burdened by many failings and infirmities—yet THEY ARE SAFE. There is no limit to this; for the Word that secures it CANNOT BE BROKEN, and the Will that ordains it CANNOT BE RESISTED.

What a future yet remains for all God's people! All, Jews or Gentiles, one in Christ, Ephes. ii. Grace on earth, glory in heaven! Freedom from temptation, suffering, oppression, and sin; and not one of all His chosen ones will be lost or left behind.

The Book of Esther.

This Book is remarkable for not containing the name of God, whilst it is full (from first to last) of the evidence of His power, wisdom, faithfulness to His promise, and providence. It is a glimpse at Jewish history during the captivity, and seems designed to afford us information as to the various influences then bearing on the exiles, and the way in which those influences were received, the main point being the danger and the deliverance.

The Babylonian monarchy, that had destroyed the Jewish, had now (as foretold in Jeremiah l., li. and Isa. xliv., xlv.) been itself overturned by the Medo-Persian: Dan. v. One result had been the comparative deliverance of the Jews, as noticed in the previous Lesson. Many of them had already returned to Judea, Ezra, ii. but the numbers there mentioned seem to have borne a small proportion to the whole scattered nation, whose very existence was now to be threatened. It is evident, from Esther iii. 8.; viii. 10—15, that there were many Jews widely dispersed.

The narrative is very striking in many respects—showing the peculiarities of character, and the influence of those peculiarities not only on the welfare of individuals, but the fortunes of nations. Vashti's modesty, refusing to bend to the King's drunken command (chap. i. 10—12) prepares the way for Esther's advancement. Esther's character had been mainly formed (in trouble, chap. ii. 7) by Mordecai. She, pious, patriotic, but timid, is upheld by his firmer character, in which appears something even of sternness; whilst his religious independence keeps him from offering servile homage to Haman. The latter, proud, ambitious, conceited (chap. vi. 6), revengeful, resolute, contrasts with his monarch, pleasure-loving, thoughtless, easily moved, yet impetuous and determined when really aroused. Such are the characters at work in this history.

But behind all can be traced the workings of an unseen Almighty hand, known by its effects, not by any visible interference; and this appears to be the design, or at any rate the great feature of the Book. History is God's Work; either indirectly ordering what is good, or in either permitting and over-ruling, or foiling what is evil. Esther must become Queen to reach Ahasuerus; Mordecai must save the King's life to establish a claim to his gratitude; at the very crisis of the whole, the King cannot sleep, and the Book read to him opens at the needed record of Mordecai's service. The very jealousy (though causeless) of the king urges him to a prompt and heavy judgment on the merciless persecutor; and all these causes combined, meet in

The Result—the deliverance of God's people to His praise and honour. Far and wide is the lesson learnt (which we also may apply for our own comfort), that though God's people may suffer they are NEVER FORGOTTEN, NEVER FORSAKEN, Psalm xci.

The Book of Job.

To a thoughtful mind there is scarcely a more interesting Book in the Bible than this. Grandeur and simplicity are closely mingled: the same Almighty hand that guides all creation is seen to be shaping the course and circumstances of a single individual. The "shades of character" also displayed in it are of great variety and interest.

Without room to enter here into arguments about the date of Job's life, we simply state our belief that he is probably the same person as Jobab mentioned in Gen. x. 29 as fourth in descent from Shem, and four generations before Abram. All the circumstances that are narrated belong to a Pastoral life, and a Patriarchal form of religion and government, before the general establishment of cities and national distinctions, and especially having no reference to the great facts of Jewish History, which therefore we conclude to have occurred afterwards.

Before turning to the chief ideas suggested by the Book, let us notice—I. The circumstances related. A man who had lived in wealth and power, commanding the respect of all around him by his greatness, and their affection by his goodness, is suddenly reduced to poverty and bereaved of his children. Three friends come from a distance, intending to console him, but the depth of his calamities leads them to a misconception of his character, and they accuse him as a hypocrite; but God at length interposes to justify Job.

II. The general view here given us of the state of society, and extent of knowledge in those times. It is a great mistake to suppose that mankind, generally, have emerged from a state of barbarism. The Books of Genesis and Job prove, on the contrary, that God endowed man at first with ample knowledge and abundant resources:-whilst the degradation that has since fallen on so many nations is traced there (and in Romans i.) to the progress of SIN, and wanderings from God. The incidents in Job show—established government—the power of law—the observance of sacrifices—the influence of social sympathy—knowledge of the natural world—of astronomy—of mining—and other matters.

The leading purport of the Book appears to be to set forth the grand doctrine of God's moral government of the world by the punishment of the wicked and the happiness of the righteous, but at the same time to enforce the equally important truth that this government is carried on in a way that man cannot always understand. God is so infinitely great, so wise, so far-seeing that the human mind cannot grasp His plans in all their details. Therefore many events may puzzle us; but this Book strengthens our faith—ALL WILL BE EXPLAINED AT LAST, and God's justice, wisdom, and love justified before the world.

As regards others then, we are not to take SUFFERING as a sign of particular and gross SIN. And as regards ourselves, let us bear our chastenings patiently, because they are far less than we deserve, and they are intended for our good. Heb. xii. 6—11.

The Book of Psalms.

This Book is another remarkable instance of a special character and design in a portion of God's Word. Similar prayers, meditations, and thanksgivings are to be found scattered through the rest of the Bible, but here it has pleased the Holy Spirit to lay before us a collection of such passages, ample and varied.

Let us look at it in the twofold aspect of

1st. A Record of experience; and

2nd. A manual for use.

I. A record of experience. As such, it is very varied, and extends over a wide period of time. Psalm xc., for instance, was written by Moses; the cxxxvii., during the captivity, almost the two extremes of Jewish history, so far as related in the Old Testament; whilst the greater part were written by King David, "the sweet Psalmist." Thus we find what different men, and under what different circumstances, have left their record here of God's dealings with them, and of their own communion with Him, in rhythm and metre, capable of being sung.

In some we find a general description of God's government, as Ps. cvii.; in others, a vivid picture of particular dealings with the Jews. Some take a wide range of doctrine or truth, as the xix. and cxix.; others are directed to some especial point, as lxxiii. and lxxvii. And prayer and praise mingle in a large number, as, indeed, they always should on earth.

And what is this recorded experience of God's people in such different ages and circumstances? Take it in reference to the great points of what we are and what our God is. There is no variation. All alike, in these communings of the heart with God, speak of man's sinfulness, weakness, and unbelief. All tell of conflict with various temptations. But all alike tell of God's faithfulness, love, power, wisdom, majesty. No deeper confessions could be imagined than Ps. li.—no stronger faith in God's mercy than Ps. ciii.—no greater love to God's Word than Ps. cxix.—no clearer testimony to the then future Messiah than Ps. ii., lxxii., cx.; whilst the last few Psalms, full of thanksgiving, seem almost an anticipation of the praises of heaven.

II. As a manual for daily use, this Book stands pre-eminent. Our Church's sense of this is seen in her appointing portions for daily reading in Divine Service; and whilst no portion of the Bible should be neglected, this stands on its own and highest ground for claiming constant use. Scarcely can a state of mind be imagined (in a child of God) that would not find here its ideas clothed in the very fittest language. No portion of the Bible suggests more readily prayers and thanksgivings; and the memory that is well stored with this Book has gained a rich and profitable treasure. Let us bless God for such a gift.

The Lecture.

SEPARATE SERVICES FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN.

[A Paper read before the Sunday School Teachers' Class of the Islington Branch of the Church of England Young Men's Society on the 28th October, 1862, by T. Adams Phillips, Hon. Sec. of the Class.]

The Christian religion, in whatever light we view it, bears on its face the stamp of its more than human origin. Apparent as this is in its profound wisdom, its lofty morality, and its wonderful internal concord, it is no less visible in its adaptability to all sorts and conditions of men. The most uneducated and simple-minded tiller of the soil can understand enough for his salvation, and for his happiness; while the most deeply read and profoundly thinking philosopher may exercise his largest powers, and yet feel that he has scarcely moved a step towards grasping its wondrous truths. The man of worldly experience can find its precepts to be his best and surest guide in the gravest transactions of his weighty business; while the infant of tender years can carry out its loving mandates in its little world of play.

And so in worship; the long and stately dedication prayer of Solomon, that masterpiece of florid and earnest supplication, so marvellously displaying both his wisdom and his piety; and the short and simple prayer of the publican, welling up from his heart at the moment, and the few words put by Eli into little Samuel's mouth, alike crave and find acceptance at the footstool of Almighty favour; while the fervid Psalms of Moses and David, and the joyous Hosannahs of the little ones of Jerusalem, alike meet with the Divine approval.

That the prayers and praises of the little ones of the flock are regarded by, and pleasing to their Heavenly Father, then, cannot for a moment be doubted; and that God requires of his worshippers hearty and intelligent service is plainly declared in Holy Scripture. The question, then, naturally follows,—"Is there, as a rule, provided for the younger members of our Sunday schools such a form of public worship as they may, and can join in with their hearts, and as a condition precedent to that, with their understanding?

To this we think that the melancholy, but almost universal reply must be,—*There is not.*

Before proceeding to discuss how this want may be supplied, let us for a few moments consider *what is generally provided for them.* It is this:—A service of prayer and praise compiled exclusively for, and admirably adapted to, the adult members of the Church (though requiring even from them careful attention), followed by a sermon addressed, as a rule, exclusively to such adult members (and often but slightly appreciated by them), the whole occupying an hour-and-three-quarters to two hours, during which the children must remain comparatively in one position, and which in their case follows, with but a short interval, an hour or an hour-and-a-half of school teaching, itself too often not of the most lively or interesting description; added to which, in nine Churches out of ten, they are placed *en masse*, on uncomfortable forms without backs, in some dark, out-of-the-way corner, where they can see little and hear less—unless, indeed, they take great pains to pay attention, which (seeing that their elders who are in good comfortable central seats, and with a knowledge of their duty, too often fail to do) we can scarcely expect

of them. Nor is this all—their attendance at this service is not of their own free will, but compulsory, a necessary sequel to their attendance at school. Too often they know full well that attendance may mean the probability of purgatory, but that absence precedes the certainty of punishment. Ere we, however, point out (if, indeed, that be at all needed) what there is to be said against the present system, let us hear what its advocates have to say in favour of its retention.

And here we must commence by stating our conviction that the majority of people, both clergy and laity, are passive, rather than active supporters of the existing state of things. Nine-tenths of the congregation rarely give the children a thought, except on School-sermon-Sundays, or when they chance to be more noisy than usual; and in this latter case, I fear, the thoughts arise rather from annoyance at their own discomfort than from sympathy with that of the children. Or, if the subject be brought specially before them, their reply will probably be, "The children have come to church, and sat in that gallery time out of mind, and why should they not continue to do so?"

Some, however, do think on the subject, and do desire the best good of the children, and yet advocate no alteration. Their great argument is based upon the power of habit and early associations. "Bring the little ones," say they, "in their early years to church, and it will grow into a habit with them to come, which will continue to influence them when they are older and left to themselves."

We quite admit the force of habit (in fact, we fear that much of the external religion of the present day is the result of habit, rather than of conviction), and such habits (and even they are not utterly useless) may be formed in the case of children who (as is the case with the generality of the middle classes) go to church with their parents, and sit in good seats, and who probably have at least some explanation of the service from them, and who, above all (though their attendance as children may be said to be compulsory), have no clearly defined period when that compulsion is removed and a change of seats necessitated, as is the case with our Sunday scholars, when they leave school. But what are the habits our children acquire? They can't understand, therefore they don't attend, and as a necessary consequence, go to sleep, or talk to one another, and this repeated week by week grows into habit, which bears as its natural fruit disrespect for God's house. And what are their early associations with Church? To them it is a place where they are forced to endure an unmeaning and wearisome penance, from which they will do their best to escape at the earliest possible opportunity. We have, probably, already sufficiently shown the evils of the present system; let us briefly sum them up under two heads—

Negatively,—The children, except in few cases, do *not worship*.

Positively,—Evil habits in church and a dislike of it are engendered, of which the former begets disrespect of God's house; and that, strongly aided by the latter, causes the children to cease attending church at all, as soon as it is open to them to do so.

Hence one of the great causes of want of visible results of our teaching. The happy side of religion which we,—feebly alas! indeed,—endeavour to explain to them in school, is defaced and buried beneath the painful side of it which they have to suffer at Church. On this point hear what says the Rev. J. Clay, after more than thirty years experience as a gaol chaplain, in one of his reports some years ago, "To the discomfort experienced by children, especially of the lower classes, in places of worship—the cold, the fatigue, and the hard raps from the beadle's or nomi-

tor's cane, which afflict them during the long service, and inspire a distaste for church or chapel—I attribute much of the godlessness which leads to crime." And the Rev. J. Erskine Clarke, of Derby, well-known for his deep knowledge and skilful treatment of the working classes, says, "I believe that the enforced attendance on a public worship intended for adults has been one great cause of the comparative failure of Sunday school work. A boy finds himself compelled to sit out a long service which, with his best attention, he cannot understand and follow, and so he comes to think that all education, all religious duty, is equally unreal, and he views it all as a dreary penance."

Most of the observations we have heretofore made, and, indeed, almost the whole of this paper, refers more especially to the case of town children. As a general rule, country children are better located in church; and the intelligence of a rustic congregation being usually lower than that of one in town, it is more easy to adapt the sermon, at least, to the understanding of all. Much, however, even here, remains to be done.

The ordinary course of proceeding being, then, so unsatisfactory, both when considered in itself and in the results it produces, and in those which it fails to produce, the questions force themselves on our minds, Is there any remedy for the evil? What substitutes can be suggested? Have they been tried? And how have they been found to answer? This is, in fact, the practical portion of our subject.

The plan, to my mind, most recommendable, and least open to objection of any sort, would be to have a service in the church, selected from the Morning Prayer, conducted by one of the clergy, and followed by a short address or sermon by him, adapted to the capacity of children. This, however, is in practice impossible, or, at least, is generally supposed to be so.

Failing this plan, what next shall be suggested? Some have advocated that a small portion—say ten minutes—of each sermon should be specially addressed to the children, to be called the children's portion. But would this compensate for the wearisome service and the remaining part of the, to them unintelligible, sermon? Others, again, propose special services for the children in the church, say on one Sunday afternoon in the month. This is very good so far, but not enough; a weekly service is needed. In connection with this school we have such a service once a quarter, and the children look forward to it with pleasure, and seem thoroughly to appreciate and enjoy it. Being unable to have it in the parish church, we hold it in the Bishop Wilson Memorial Hall. The afternoon service is read, and a sermon to children follows. The children of the congregation are invited, in addition to the school children, and the Hall is generally quite full.

Others, again, say, and with considerable reason, that if the clergy, as they are bound to do, observed the Rubric following the Church Catechism, in the Prayer Book, the necessity for separate services for the children would be, in great part at least, obviated. The Prayer Book, indeed, except in the Baptismal Service, as far as I remember, makes no reference to children, except in this Rubric. It runs as follows:—"The curate of every parish shall diligently, upon Sundays and holy days, after the Second Lesson at Evening Prayer, openly in the church, instruct and examine so many children of his parish sent unto him as he shall think convenient, in some part of the Catechism." This catechising stands in the place of a sermon to the children, and they, being of necessity placed in a good position for the purpose of being catechised, most of the objections to the children's attendance at church

before adverted to disappear. As far as my information goes,—for I have no personal experience upon the subject,—wherever this plan is properly carried out, it has been found to answer admirably. Many an unlearned member of the congregation, also, in listening to the questions and answers, of necessity simple, learns lessons which might otherwise be untaught.

Another plan has been devised and carried into practice by the Rev. J. Erskine Clarke, to whom I have already alluded. Finding how much the children disliked the service at church, and under "a growing conviction" that what was so utterly distasteful "to them could never be acceptable to God, who delights in a willing service, and loves a cheerful giver," he addressed the children, telling them that henceforth no one should be compelled to attend church, but, at the same time, explaining to them the duty of all to attend public worship. "He then arranged the hours of school and church, so as to allow time after the morning school, and before church, for about half an hour's active responsive worship by boys and girls together. He considered that the teaching in each class corresponded to the sermon; and the service that followed he esteemed sufficient for the devotional exercise of the great mass of the younger scholars; while those whose hearts were attuned to further worship could come to the church service." The results of the experiment he has found most encouraging. A great many of the children voluntarily attend the church service, and not unfrequently have been the means of inducing their parents to accompany them; while the senior class has largely increased in numbers. Of course, numerous objections have been raised to the plan, but Mr. Clarke has a satisfactory reply to most, if not all, of them.

Another plan, varying somewhat from the above, and which has been adopted in a parish of 7,000, where the incumbent has a curate to assist him is as follows:—School assembles at nine a.m. After singing and prayer, and a few remarks by the superintendent, all the children, except the senior classes, are taken to church. At half-past nine service begins, consisting of the usual Morning Prayer, including the Psalms and Lessons, as far as the end of the third Collect. It is conducted by the incumbent or curate, and only the teachers and children are present, the most orderly scholars forming the choir. Then comes a short sermon, from seven to ten minutes generally, illustrating one of the Lessons. A hymn is then sung, and the blessing pronounced. Service is over by a quarter past ten, when the children return to school, and, after another hymn, the usual teaching is commenced. At twelve, the school is dismissed, and the teachers repair to church.

None of these plans, except the first and the last, meet the case in all its bearings, and none of them are universally applicable; and neither the first nor the last being generally attainable, what must be substituted for them? To this we reply, a service as nearly similar to it as possible, held in the school, or, better still, in some other building; for by taking the children from one place to another, the idea of the service being but a continuation of school is dissipated, and the notion of *going* to church suggested. In a large parish, the children of three or four schools might meet together, and the curates of the churches take the service in turns. If no clergyman can be obtained to take it, a teacher, or other qualified person, must supply his place. This, I believe, is the plan most usually adopted in schools where our subject has received the consideration which it deserves. I know that it has been adopted in several, at least

of the schools in this parish. Many objections, of course, have been made against it, such as leading the children to grow up Dissenters, &c., but most that arise have already been stated and replied to. The details of the mode of conducting such a service will, of course, vary in different schools, but the general outline is, as far as I have been able to learn, much the same, Personal experience on such matters is, however, always more valuable than descriptions at second hand, and as our object in these classes is of a practical character, I will describe with some minuteness the mode in which the Separate Service is conducted in this school, and I would ask you to weigh each particular, even though at first sight seemingly trivial. The three youngest classes of the boys' school (that is, the non-readers), the same of the girls, and all the children of the infant school (except the babies) are assembled in the boys' room, and arranged some on the fixed seats on each side (but in advance of the superintendent's desk), and the rest on forms placed across the room. About 120 thus assemble every Sunday morning, at eleven o'clock, and three or four teachers (ladies) kindly attend to maintain order. The service was for some time conducted by the curate, but church engagements unfortunately intervening, it was undertaken by four of the teachers, each having his own Sunday in the month, the fifth Sunday, when occurring, being supplied by a fifth teacher. It is now conducted by a candidate for Holy orders, who is eminently fitted for the post. The school boasts a seraphine, which is played by one of the teachers, and is a great help in the musical part of the service. The service commences with a simple hymn (bye-the-bye, how scarce are really good hymns for children!), which hymn is read out one line at a time—the children repeat the line after the teacher—the second line is treated in the same way and then both lines are sung, and so on through the hymn. If the children fail to repeat any line pretty generally, the process of reading and repeating is gone through again. The hymn concluded, one of the sentences is read, followed by the general confession. In this and all other responsive prayers, the teacher finishes each sentence before the children commence. This is done to keep them clear and together, and to prevent confusion—they soon get into the way of it with a little care. Then follows the collect "O Lord, whose nature and property," the Lord's prayer, and the versicles following it; and a chapter from the old or new Testament is read, selected to suit the subject of the address. Another hymn is then introduced to enliven the children after the chapter and before the prayers following. The Apostles' Creed is next repeated in the same manner as the confession, and then come the following prayers:—the Collect for the day, the 3rd Collect at morning prayer, the prayer for the clergy and people, the prayer for all conditions of men, the general thanksgiving, the prayer of St. Chrysostem, and the Apostolic benediction. Another hymn and a collect precede the address, which is followed by a Collect and the blessing. The children are then dismissed in quiet order at 12 o'clock.

These various Children's Services are all, more or less, feasible, and each has its strong and weak points. It seems, however, to me that in the existing state of feeling of clergy and congregation towards the children of the poor, the one last described is the one most generally practicable, and least likely to meet with obstacles in its carrying out, though, perhaps, in some points, not so theoretically unexceptionable as one or two of the others. However, whichever be adopted, endeavours should be made to conform in all respects, as far as possible, to the Church Service and procedure, as laid down in the Book of Common Prayer

(so far as is consistent with the children intelligently joining in it), in order that it may be a training for attendance at church, and that there may not be the slightest fear of the children mistaking it for, or comparing it with a Dissenting Service.

I would, therefore, on no account allow the introduction of extempore prayer, unless very sparingly, to simplify a few of the less easily understood petitions. I cannot see the necessity for it, and all the arguments in favour of a form of prayer seem to me to apply with increased force to a service for children; added to which I feel sure that in the case of nine teachers out of ten (particularly as they have no special training for the work), the extempore prayer would be less intelligible to the children than those of our most beautiful Liturgy. There is much, too, as we have before remarked, in the association of ideas, and it is well, therefore, to familiarize their minds from earliest infancy with the Liturgy of the Church to which we wish them, as they grow older, to be attached; and the better to accustom them to the various parts of the Prayer Book, and to form an agreeable variety, the selection of prayers mentioned above might be alternated with the Litany. There would then be very little that would be new or strange to them when old enough to attend church; and to enable them to join more intelligently in the service, both now and hereafter, portions of it might with advantage be taken occasionally as the subject of the sermon or address. Whichever form of service be adopted, attendance at church should always be held out as something pleasant in the future, and as a reward of good conduct.

They will thus, more than in any other way, be led to be anxious to attend it. It is a good plan to encourage those parents who like their children to go to church with them to call for them on their way; while, as soon as the superintendent thinks he can trust any child by itself, he or she should be allowed to go to church and sit with the rest of the congregation.

In all services for children, of whatever nature, and equally whether conducted by a clergyman or layman, one great difficulty is the sermon or address. There is no doubt that to most people it is not easy to speak attractively and profitably to young children. Agreed;—but study and experience of the characters and natures of children, persevering diligence in preparation, and constant endeavours to enter into and realise the feelings of the little ones, will overcome the difficulty. Considerable care is requisite, both in the selection of the text or subject and in its treatment. Its general subject should be founded on, or illustrated by, the chapter read as the lesson. It is not necessary (although it is better) to have a text, and, by all means, let it be short. It is well, *after* a brief introduction, to make all the children repeat the text several times; but with this exception, and perhaps occasionally, but *very* rarely, a simple question, the children should be quite silent, as much like what they should be at church as possible. The address should be short (never exceeding twenty minutes), and simple, and *thoroughly earnest*. This last is vitally essential. None see so quickly as children whether one is in earnest or not, and they will be impressed accordingly. By all means let the subject be clearly arranged and divided, and well garnished with anecdotes, or, better still, illustrations, especially homely ones, drawn from everyday life, or from other and well-known parts of Scripture, and carefully kept down to the level of the children's understandings. The last few minutes should be employed in the direct personal application of the subject to their hearts and consciences.

In conclusion, let us always keep in mind what is the object of these separate services—to afford to the little ones of Christ's flock a service of prayer and praise, in which they can take part intelligently; to remove them from a position which too often inspires a dislike for Church; and to train them for the services of the Sanctuary, when they shall be old enough to enter into and understand them, the ultimate end of all being the salvation and growth in grace of their young but immortal souls, and the glory of their and our Creator and Father.

T. H. P.

Sunday School Institute.

QUARTERLY RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

THE first of the Meetings at the Rooms of the Institute during the past quarter was the

DEVOTIONAL MEETING,

on the 2nd of October, when Mr. HARTNELL conducted the proceedings, on behalf of the Committee, in the absence of the Rev. E. AURIOL.

A SOCIAL MEETING,

held on Thursday evening, the 27th of November, was very numerously attended, 125 members being present, and the whole available space occupied. After tea, the chair was taken by the Rev. E. SPOONER, Vicar of Heston, who, after appropriate prayer, spoke of the advantage of social gatherings conducted on right principles, and especially to teachers, for they assured them that they are not working single-handed, but that each is only one of many, of a large company sharing the same difficulties and seeking the same great end. He pointed out the necessity of those who teach feeling the living power of the Gospel themselves; for religion is not simply a *light* to eternity, but a new and real *life* now.

Mr. SANDBY spoke of the various ways in which teachers could express active sympathy towards their fellow-teachers, the children in their schools, to the Institute in its work, and to those afar off, now specially needing their help—the distressed teachers and scholars in Lancashire and the North.

The last-named subject led to a general conversation as to the mode in which such collections as those proposed by the Institute could be made, and Messrs. Hart, Heald, Hartnell, Reid, Norton, and others, took part in the discussion, and also in commending the Meetings and Publications of the Institute to the especial notice of the members.

A SUPERINTENDENTS' MEETING

was held on the 18th of December, when, after taking tea, those present were consulted as to any new methods by which the Society could be made more useful to the Sunday schools belonging to the Church.

TRAINING LESSONS,

by members of the Institute, have been given in various parts of the Metropolis and its suburbs. In connexion with the Young Men's Society, three were delivered at St. George's, Bloomsbury, as follow:—

Oct. 21,—Testament Class, by Mr. HEALD—Luke xvii.

Nov. 18,—Bible Class, by Mr. NORTON —Isaiah lv.

Dec. 16,—Elementary Class, by Mr. REID—"The woman of Canaan."

Also for the same Society at Islington, on Nov. 25, by Mr. REID, to a Testament Class, on "The Transfiguration."

Three Training Lessons have also been given at Holy Trinity, Kentish Town, under the presidency of the Rev. C. LEE, as follow:—

Nov. 14,—to a Bible Class, by Mr. S. B. POWER—Lev. xvi.

Nov. 21,—to a Testament Class, by Mr. H. A. MAUDE—Luke xiv.

Nov. 28,—to an Elementary Class, by Mr. HEALD—"The Sabbath."

Also at Penge, on Oct. 5, by Mr. J. F. REID, to an Elementary Class;

At Kilburn, on Nov. 12, by Mr. NORTON, to a Bible Class;

At Kennington, on Dec. 16, by Mr. NORTON, to a Bible Class; and

At Christ Church, Hampstead, on Dec. 17, by Mr. NORTON, to a Testament Class.

DEPUTATIONS

from the Institute (in addition to that which proceeded to Ireland, fully reported elsewhere), have attended the Meeting of the South London Association at Brixton, on the 14th of Oct. at which Messrs. Sandby and Hartnell were present; the first meeting of the Shoreditch Church Sunday School Association, on the 24th of October, in which Messrs. Fleet and Sandby took part; at Boston, Lincolnshire (the Rev. G. B. Blenkin in the chair), where Mr. Fleet spoke on behalf of the Institute; at Ryde, Isle of Wight, where Mr. Norton attended the Meeting held in the Town Hall (Rev. H. Ewbank in the chair); the Conference of clergy and teachers at St. Matthew's, Brixton, on the 20th of November, under the presidency of the Ven. Archdeacon Utterton, at which Mr. Fleet was present, who also attended the meeting of teachers, on the 8th of December, at Christ Church, Streatham.

THE NEW YEAR'S PUBLICATIONS

have been prepared, and are now ready. They consist of Three Addresses;—to Teachers, entitled, "Continuance in well doing;" to Scholars,—"Following Jesus;" and to Parents,—"The Right Place for the Children." Also an Almanac for Scholars, containing, besides their School and Church Lessons, a Text for every day in the year.

THE NEW YEAR'S COMMUNION SERVICE

will (D.V.) be held at St. Dunstan's Church, Fleet Street, on New Year's Day, the service to commence at seven o'clock, after which a Sermon to Teachers will be preached by the Rev C. D. MARSTON, M.A., Rector of St. Mary's, Marylebone, prior to the administration of the Holy Communion.

At the request of several Superintendents of schools, in and around the metropolis, the Committee have arranged that the Meetings, &c., at the Institute, shall be held alternately on Thursday and Tuesday evenings, to suit the convenience of Teachers who may have a fixed engagement on either evening. The following are already decided upon, in addition to the New Year's Service:—those to follow (it is hoped weekly) have not yet been arranged:—

1863.

Thursday, Jan. 8. At the Institute: Training Lesson, Mr. N. HARTNELL—Matt. xix. 16.

Tuesday, Jan. 13. Ditto Mr. E. STOCK, Psalm ii.

Thursday, Jan. 22. Conversational Meeting. "Separate Services."

Tuesday, Jan. 27. Training Lesson. H. G. Heald—Luke vii. 11.

The following meetings will be held at the School Rooms of the

CHAPEL OF EASE, HOLLOWAY,

under the presidency of the Rev. J. Hambleton M.A.

1863.

Wednesday, Feb. 4. An address on Sunday School work, by Mr. W. Sandby.

Feb. 11. Bible Class, Gen. xlv. 1—16 Mr. H. W. Green.

Feb. 18. Testament Class.

Feb. 25. Elementary Class, Mr. J. F. REID. "The nobleman's son healed," John iv. Tablet Lesson.

The following additions to

THE FUNDS

of the Institute, received during the past quarter, are gratefully acknowledged:—

DONATIONS, &c.

	£	s.	d.
Trinity Sunday School, Haverstock Hill	1	1	0
Penge Sunday School	1	1	0
Mrs. Head	1	0	0
S. Marshall, Esq.	10	0	0
Miss Tibbatt	0	10	0
Collected after Meeting in Belfast	1	5	0
,, at Aughnacloy	1	8	6
,, by Mr. Langhorne	0	3	6

NEW ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Mr. Prichard	0	5	0
J. B. Walker, Esq.	1	1	0
W. S. Shaw, Esq.	1	1	0
Rev. W. Niven	1	1	0

NEW SUBSCRIBING SCHOOLS.

Great Witcombe	0	10	6
St. John's, Ipswich	0	10	6
Staunton	0	10	6
St. Simon's, Bristol	0	10	6
St. Mary's, Newry	0	10	6
Windsor Hill	0	10	6
Queen Camel	0	10	6
Chapel of Ease, Islington	1	1	0
St. Pancras	1	1	0
Maghera, Ireland	0	10	6
St. Michael's, Islington	1	1	0
Armagh School	0	10	6
Barrack Street, Belfast	0	10	6
St. Paul's, ditto	0	10	6

SUNDAY SCHOOL AID FOR LANCASHIRE.

REPRESENTATIONS from many quarters having reached the Committee, in regard to the distress prevailing among Sunday school teachers and Sunday scholars belonging to the Church of England, in the Cotton Districts in the North; and they being also desirous to show their own sympathy with those so closely associated with them in their holy work, in this their hour of need, and to obtain for them some real expression of Christian love from others similarly engaged, the Committee have addressed a letter to the Clergy and Superintendents of schools, in connection with the Institute, asking them kindly to co-operate with them in laying the case before those Teachers and Sunday scholars who are not exposed to this sad calamity, inviting them to help other teachers and scholars at a time when they are threatened with starvation, by giving what they can spare from Sunday to Sunday; and an Address has been prepared (copies of which can be obtained free, on appli-

cation at the Institute, 41, Ludgate Hill) to the scholars in Church Sunday schools on the subject.

Whatever sums are thus collected, will be remitted, free of all expense, to clergymen in the various parishes in the North, where the distress most prevails, that they may dispense these contributions among the necessitous members of their Sunday schools, as tokens of the brotherly love of their fellow teachers and scholars.

Various sums have been received on behalf of this Fund. The Committee had great pleasure in finding that collections had been arranged in many Schools, previous to the issue of their appeal. The Committee acknowledge the receipt of various amounts from the following Sunday Schools:—

Christ Chapel, Maida Hill.
Christ Church, St. Marylebone.
St. Jude's, Mildmay Park.
St. James's, Bradford.
St. James's, Walthamstow.
St. Mary, Woolnoth.
St. Sepulchre's.
St. Mark's, Kennington.
Britannia Row, Islington.
Christ Church, Camberwell.
St. Helen's, Lancashire.
Merrow, Guildford.
Old St. Pancras.
Lowmoor, Bradford.
Hill Top.
Raw Hook.
Newhaven, Sussex.

Remittances have been sent to

Whitfield Sunday School.
Crooke near Wigan.
St. Thomas's.
St. Michael's.
St. James's, Heywood, &c. &c.

The need for assistance still exists, and our exertions on this behalf should not be relaxed.

DEPUTATION TO BELFAST.

(Abridged from the Belfast News-Letter, October 24th, 1862.)

YESTERDAY evening, a public meeting was held in the Ulster Hall, Belfast, for the purpose of receiving and hearing a deputation from the United Church of England and Ireland Sunday school Institute, a Society having their offices at 41, Ludgate Hill, London. The deputation from London consisted of Messrs. Norton and Reid. For a long past, many of the Irish clergy and Sunday school superintendents have been anxious to receive aid from the Church of England Sunday School Institute. Several parties applied to the members of the Institute, inviting them to pay a visit to Ireland. Accordingly, the deputation arrived in Belfast last week. They held meetings in Ballymena, Newry, and other towns; and a morning meeting was held yesterday, in Christ Church Mission Room, when Dr. PURDON presided. At the evening meeting, in the Ulster Hall, a large number of teachers and friends of Sunday schools was present, the hall being filled. Amongst those present were:—The Rev. Dr. Drew, the Very Rev. Dean of Dromore, Rev. Dr. Miller, Vicar of Belfast; Rev. R. J. Hobson, Rev. F. Dobbs, Prebendary of Connor; Rev. A. Bullick, Rector of Ardquin; Rev. W. Eade, Rev. Dr.

Binney, Bangor; Rev. W. Payne, Rector of Templecorran; Rev. W. Duffin, Rector of Maghera; Rev. J. S. Beers, Rector of Donaghcloney; Rev. E. Brooke, Rector of Drumgooland; Rev. E. Cartwright, Christ Church; Rev. E. Roe, Gartre; Rev. Charles Allen, St. Paul's, Belfast; Lieut-Col. Child, Messrs. Norton and Reid, deputation; Rev. E. J. Hartrick, Magdalene Church, Belfast; Rev. J. Wilson, Rev. A. Bewley, Rev. Andrew Creary, Prebendary of Dunsford; Capt. Dyer, R.N.; Charles Gaussen, Esq., &c.

The chair was occupied by the Rev. Dr. DREW.

The Very Rev. the DEAN of DROMORE read a portion of the 119th Psalm; and a hymn, having been sung, prayer was offered up by the Rev. Dr. MILLER, Vicar of Belfast. The Rev. E. J. Hartrick was then appointed secretary, to the meeting.

The CHAIRMAN knew it was to the old time associations which bound him to Belfast he was indebted for the honourable position in which he now found himself. He referred to the labours which he had long shared in Sunday school work. Teachers should have regard to supplication and intercession, that God would bless their labours. They were to have recourse to earnest study, that they might be duly prepared for their classes. Nor was adaptation to the years, habits, and feelings of the scholars to be forgotten. He illustrated this by passages from Ecclesiastes—especially the two last chapters. He spoke of the importance of a godly life, which should teach outside the school, as words teach within the school. Visitation of the children was most desirable. Teachers should remember, of how vast an army they were members, and remember each other in prayer. Dr. Drew then referred to the excellent Sunday school Society for Ireland, and to the generosity and assiduity shown by this society for half-a-century. They issued Bibles, Testaments, &c.—in fact, whatever was needful for the children of Sunday schools. The Sunday School Institute, of England, aimed at helping teachers, and had made great advances in their good work. They in nowise interfered with our Sunday school Society for Ireland They had its good wishes. Both Societies marched fraternally in parallel lines, doing God's works amicably and effectively. He was glad of this opportunity to stereotype his love and gratitude to his old friends in Dublin, to whom he owed many privileged days when visiting England as their deputation—visits which led to many lasting and sanctified friendships. He would ask Mr. Norton, one of the deputation, to address the meeting.

Mr. NORTON, who was enthusiastically received, said he might tell that meeting that they came there with the full approval of the Sunday school Society for Ireland, to whom they showed their books and stated their object when in Dublin, and who told them to go on—that they would rejoice in their Sunday schools being assisted from the Society in England. The Church of England Sunday School Institute was established in the year 1845. Its promoters felt that an effort ought to be made to render the Sunday schools in connection with the United Church of England and Ireland more efficient, and they resolved, in dependence of the Divine blessing, to attempt it. The effort was at once countenanced and aided by many of the clergy, and that assistance was widened and increased with the growth of the Society. Its objects might be briefly described as—to promote union among Church Sunday schools; to supply teachers with information upon such subjects as shall tend to the better instruction of their classes; to collect and communicate information as to the best methods of organising and conducting Sunday schools; to obtain, and record statistical details as to their con-

dition; and to assist in the establishment and extension of them. In promoting these objects, the committee however, sought no interference whatever, with a school; they would exercise no external influence in any way inconsistent with the due order and discipline of the parochial management: but they did seek to reach every individual teacher in the United Church throughout the kingdom and the colonies, with this simple intention—to arouse the indolent; to cheer the desponding; to warn the unfaithful; to instruct the inexperienced; to assist the uneducated, and to guide the inquiring. The means by which they proposed to carry out these objects were—by establishing a central medium of communication between Church Sunday schools, through which information might be given and received; by a constant attention to the various systems of instruction, and to new publications on Sunday school education; by the publication of magazines, lessons, Scripture notes, and material for the organisation and management of the Sunday school; by making grants towards the establishment or extension of Sunday schools at home or in the colonies; by lectures, conversational meetings, training classes, &c., both in London and the provinces; by a well-furnished teachers' library and reading room for the use of metropolitan teachers. The publications of the Society were not numerous, for the aim of the committee was not to publish much, but to publish just what was wanted; and experience, so far, had fully justified their various efforts. A list of the publications, with explanatory remarks, could be obtained free of expense, at the offices. It was enough to state that they were designed to improve the teacher, to assist him in his lessons, and to supply a well-arranged system of registers, &c., for the management of the school as a whole. In order to place the publications within the reach of the very limited resources of Sunday schools generally, the committee publish them at a price yielding little or no profit, and are, therefore, compelled to seek the assistance of the more affluent members of the Church in carrying on and extending this branch of their work, the usefulness of of which was daily becoming more apparent. The committee were also constantly receiving appeals for grants towards the establishment and support of Sunday schools, both at home and in the colonies, and they responded to each so far as the amount of funds entrusted to them would allow. They had thus been enabled to afford truly valuable aid to many clergymen overborne with difficulties, and often scarcely able to maintain their Sunday schools in anything like decent order. In times like the present, the question might naturally be asked, What are the principles of the Institute? The answer was readily given. They appealed with confidence to their various publications, as being in accordance with the grand doctrines maintained and revered by all the children of God in Christ Jesus. Their work was to help those who would bring young children to Christ that He might bless them—a work which, perhaps, removed them from many of the controversies of the present, but which assuredly rendered of paramount importance, faith in the Redeemer, love to the Heavenly Father, and dependence on the teaching, guiding, and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. And, laying this only true foundation, their aim was to train up their children to become enlightened and intelligent members of their beloved Church: to live and die in that pure faith which their forefathers handed down to them; and to prize beyond life itself that Holy Book which, to the child as well as the adult, was the very food of the soul. The patronage and support which had been accorded to the society by the Archbishops and

Bishops bore testimony to its importance. He noticed the very great value of such an Institute to the Established Church, whose children too often were left uninstructed in the grand principles of their own religion, and, therefore, left at the mercy of others to lead them away from the Church of the country.

Mr. REID spoke of the great advantage of having fixed lessons for each Sunday, the opportunities which such a plan afforded for the previous study of the lesson, and for the subsequent examination of the class or school upon it. With this view, a series of lessons and notes for teachers upon them had been drawn up. The Old Testament history had been arranged in four distinct periods, for four years' reading; the Gospel history had been arranged for two years; and the Acts of the Apostles for one year. Fifty-two lessons had been prepared on a series of distinct Scripture topics, a similar number for the Ecclesiastical Year on the subjects of the Collects, Epistles, and Gospels; and also on the Life of Christ, in the words of Scripture, for junior classes. Then they had the Elementary Class Book, being fifty-two lessons in four short and simple texts on each subject. The Notes on all these series would be found of great advantage to young and inexperienced teachers, giving not only clear ideas of the chief subjects to be taught from each lesson, with suitable Scripture references, but also a general outline of the way in which the instruction should be conveyed. As to the privileges of members in London, donors of ten guineas and upwards, and subscribers of one guinea annually, were entitled to a free copy of each of the Society's new publications, and to the use of the library and reading room, with admission to all the lectures, meetings, and classes in connection with the Society, and to the stated members' allowance upon any of the Society's publications required either for their own use, or for the schools with which they were connected. Sunday schools in the country subscribing half-a-guinea annually would receive the privileges of membership, and would also be entitled to a free copy of all the Society's new publications. After some further remarks, he resumed his seat amid applause.

Rev. Dr. MILLER, in an able speech, moved—"That, having heard the statements of F. Norton, Esq., and J. F. Reid, Esq., the deputation of the Church of England Sunday School Institute, with great interest and satisfaction, resolve that, approving of the system adopted by that honored institution, represented by the deputation, we commend it to the favourable consideration of the clergy and laity, and especially to the superintendents and teachers of Sunday schools in connection with the Established Church." He gladly moved this resolution, while, at the same time, he would never give up his attachment to the Sunday school Society for Ireland, which had nobly said to their English friends to go through the land and do all the good they could. The motion was seconded by Rev. Mr. PAINE.

The Very Rev. Dean BAGOT moved —"That this meeting take the present opportunity to record their deepest gratitude towards the time-honored Sunday school Society for Ireland." For more than half-a-century this society has been the ready and efficient helper of all Sunday school work in Ireland. Mr. B. HEWITT seconded the motion.

Rev. Dr. BINNEY moved—"That the cordial thanks of this meeting be presented to F. Norton, Esq., and J. F. Reid, Esq., for having introduced to the notice of the members of the Established Church in Belfast, the Church of England Sunday School Institute, and for the interesting and satisfactory statements they have made." Rev. E.

J. HARTRICK seconded the motion, which was passed amid applause.

MR. REID moved that Dr. Drew vacate the chair, and that the Very Rev. the Dean of Dromore be called thereto, which being done, he moved that their best thanks be given to Dr. Drew for his kindness in presiding. Referring to an observation, by a proceeding speaker, he stated, that the Institute had no paid committee or editors. All were volunteers, and received no salaries.

Captain DYER, R.N. seconded the motion, and called attention to a fact, stated by the Rev. Dr. Urwick, in London, that the Rev. Dr. Kennedy, curate of Bright parish, County Down, established the first Sunday school Society in Ireland in 1770.

The motion was put and passed with acclamation, and, the proceedings having been closed with religious services, the meeting separated.

VISIT OF A DEPUTATION FROM THE INSTITUTE TO IRELAND.

TO THE EDITORS,

Dear Sirs,—In compliance with your request, supplemented as it has been from another quarter, and in the belief that a short sketch of our recent visit to Ireland, may not be uninteresting to your readers, I beg to offer the following account of our proceedings.

I ought, perhaps, at the outset, to mention that the reason why our Society, although known to, and appreciated by many friends in Ireland, had never previously taken any decided steps there, was simply this, that there was already in existence a Sunday School Society in full operation, aiding and encouraging the schools of all Protestant denominations; and looking at its peculiar position and difficulties, we were unwilling to add to them, by even an apparent opposition to a society so well established and valued, as the Sunday School Society for Ireland.

Circumstances, however, having recently transpired, which led to our Society being urgently pressed to extend its labours to that country, we felt it to be a call which ought not to be disregarded; but, before finally deciding upon the steps which might be desirable, we communicated with the existing Society, and pointed out in what way we thought we might advantageously labour there, without at all interfering with its operations, which, though analagous, are not identical with our own. Our friendly feeling being reciprocated, we determined at once to communicate with our friends in the north of Ireland, with a view to compliance with the many invitations received, and the satisfactory carrying out of our plans. It is perhaps, only right that I should state, that the following fundamental rule of the Sunday School Society for Ireland, precludes it entirely from doing anything for the assistance of the Teachers, a point towards which our Institute has ever directed a large share of attention, and with material success:—

"This Society shall not disseminate amongst the schools, any book relating to religious instruction, except the Scriptures, without note or comment, or extracts therefrom."

All being settled for our departure

Mr. Norton and I left London, on Monday evening, 12 Oct. arriving in Dublin the following morning. And here I cannot forbear to express my firm belief that the way had been marked out for us. The cordial welcome we everywhere received, affords the best evidence that Ireland was ripe for such efforts as ours, and leads me to hope that our visit may be blessed to the increased efficiency of Church Sunday Schools there, as well as to the encouragement of all engaged in the work.

Although we had no special work in the Capital, with the exception of a visit of courtesy which we proposed to pay to the Sunday School Society, we visited various schools for the sake of information. On Tuesday evening we were present at the Service and Controversial Class of the Irish Church Missions, held in the school room in Townsend Street, and conducted by Rev. C. F. McCarthy. The attendance was good, and the attention excellent, those present being apparently drawn from that class, for which these services are specially held. On the evening of our visit, there was no discussion, but we were informed that the Roman Catholics often take up the cause of their own Church, and that much interest and instruction are thereby added to the meetings. I was also glad to hear that a most encouraging degree of success has hitherto attended these gatherings, but as an old Sunday school teacher, I much doubted the policy of keeping up young children to so late an hour as 10 o'clock, especially as from their listlessness, they appeared to have had a fair day's work beforehand. I speak of the unfortunate boys and girls who were mounted on the distant galleries, and certainly took little interest in the proceedings. It is from no unfriendly feeling that I mention this, but I candidly think it requires re-consideration.

On the following morning, we paid a long visit to the Model Training Schools in Kildare Place, in connection with the Church Education Society for Ireland. We were fortunate in possessing an introduction to the superintendent, Mr. Wilkinson, who courteously took us over the whole establishment, explaining its varied plans, and affording us ample evidence of his fitness for his important post, as well as strengthening our own views, as to the proper method of imparting instruction. Leaving this, we visited the Government Model Training Schools, Marlborough Street; but, unfortunately, we arrived at the commencement of the half-hour break in the session, so that we had to content ourselves with a hurried glance at the school-rooms, which are lofty, and well adapted to their purpose. The number of scholars, of all ages, was considerable. From this, we repaired to the Sunday School Society, in Sackville Street, taking with us a specimen-box of our publications. Here we had the pleasure of meeting Messrs. Irvine and Boyd, the Secretaries, and they gave us a most cordial welcome. With them we had a long and most gratifying interview; exhibited our various publications; fully explained their object and use, and that too, so thoroughly to their satisfaction, that they admitted we did not in any way interfere with them, that they wished us God-speed in our coming tour, and that if they could in any way assist us, they would be delighted to do so.

Our course being thus prepared, we left Dublin on Thursday morning, with minds much relieved from anxiety, and I would fain hope, with grateful hearts for the encouragement thus far, vouchsafed to us. Arrived at Belfast the same day, we matured some of our plans, and on Friday 16th attended a Soirèe at Ballymena, under the chief management of the Rev. E. Maguire, the Rector, who during our stay, hospitably entertained us at the Glebe. A Soirèe was decided upon by the teachers, as preferable to an ordin-

ary meeting, as they were anxious to give their English visitors a warm welcome. And they succeeded most admirably. The Town Hall was hired and decorated for the occasion, the *élite* of the town and neighbourhood lent their countenance and support, and the Church choir gave their efficient help, for anthems and selected pieces, in the intervals between the addresses, and this materially added to the interest of the meeting. After tea, the chair was taken by C. H. Orr, Esq., who introduced us, when my colleague, Mr. Norton, gave an address explanatory of the Society's operations, and I followed with one upon the Teacher's work. We were succeeded by Dr. Drew, a warm friend of the Institute, and one so well-known and respected, that his name is everywhere a tower of strength. After an ovation, such as seemed to be his lot wherever he went, he asked the meeting, which had already displayed their friendly feelings towards us, to give us a real Irish welcome, a hint instantly acted upon, and intimated in the usual way. On our return to the Glebe, our host, who at the meeting had strongly recommended our plans to the attention of both clergy and teachers, told us that he anticipated great things from the social gathering, not only for us, but also for the parish at large.

On the following day, Saturday 17th, we returned to Belfast, and as we were anxious to take the earliest opportunity of paying our respects to the Bishop of Down and Connor, and Dromore, by whose invitation we were to attend the Conference in the following week, we started at once with that object, and were thus afforded an opportunity of explaining personally, as we had already partially done by letter, the objects, and operations of our Institute. His Lordship received us most courteously; invited us to breakfast with him, and his assembled clergy on the following Friday, the day on which "Sunday School Work" was to form the subject for discussion; consented to accept, for his own examination, several specimens of our publications; and intimated that as we should have the opportunity of introducing to the clergy in Conference our various plans, upon the successful manner, or otherwise, in which we might do this, would depend his decision as to giving or withholding his patronage. How far we were successful, let subsequent events testify!

The same evening, a meeting was held at the Clerical Rooms, presided over by Dr. Henry Purdon, a gentleman well-known, and appreciated for his unflagging exertions in the cause of education. After the usual opening by Rev. E. J. Hartrick, I had the pleasure of explaining the aim and operations of our Institute, as well as the circumstances under which we visited Ireland. It was satisfactory to hear, that the respected Honorary Secretary of the Sunday school Society, Mr. Irvine, had written to several of those present, expressing his hearty approval of our plans, and the pleasure he had derived from our explanatory visit. My colleague took up the subject which I had introduced, and, although the attendance was very small, the superintendents of schools, both male and female, were well represented, and it was one of the most thoroughly practical which were held during our tour. Our publications were carefully examined and canvassed, explanations asked, and as freely given, and I think I may venture to say, to the complete satisfaction of all present. Our friends, who were anxious that we should not be idle whilst in Belfast, arranged for us to visit eight schools on the following day, (Sunday) four each, in order that we might be able to form some idea of the schools of the sister country. Accordingly, Mr. Norton visited the schools of St. George's (Rev. W.

Macilwain), and St. John's (Rev. Charles Seaver). At the former he delivered an address and a training lesson, at the latter an address. In the afternoon he visited the Magdalene school (Rev. E. J. Hartrick) where he delivered two addresses and a training lesson, an address at the Barrack Street schools, and afterwards visited Christ Church.

He was much pleased with the order, and proficiency of the scholars, evincing the great care which had been bestowed upon them, and the sound instruction they had received; but I fancy he formed an opinion somewhat similar to my own, that in some cases a more systematic arrangement of Lessons is desirable.

The first schools I had the pleasure of visiting, were those in connection with Trinity Church (Rev. Theophilus Campbell). The incumbent was unfortunately on a deputation in England, so I did not see him, but on the following Friday I met him at the Conference, when he intimated his intention to join the Institute. I had an interesting conversation with his superintendent, who explained the plans of the schools (I say schools, for a shifting partition only divides boys and girls, which partition was invisible at the time of my visit). Having expressed his regret that he had not been at the Clerical Rooms the previous evening, he suggested that a meeting, *specially* for teachers, might be held, where, in a social manner, explanations might be asked, and given. My next visit was to Christ-church, where I had the pleasure of meeting Rev. R. Hannay, the Incumbent. The schools connected with this church are the largest in Belfast, and are attended by a goodly staff of teachers. I was much gratified to find the Institute series of lessons, "Scripture Characters," in use throughout the school, and that although not actually in connection with us, our operations were familiar to them, as to many others with whom we met.

One of the superintendents here repeated the suggestion previously noticed, and this induced us to decide upon the social gathering, on the following Friday evening, at the Music Hall.

In the afternoon, I first went to St. Paul's schools, and met the Incumbent, Rev. Charles Allen, who superintends his own school. He has some very interesting classes, one of which, I specially noticed as being composed of young men, whose steady attention, and persevering efforts to obtain instruction, and that too of a high order, operate beneficially upon the school at large. Our Society was barely known here, but having invited the Incumbent, and his teachers, to attend our meeting, where we should have an opportunity of fully entering into details, as to what we are doing, and can do for teachers, I was compelled to leave. (From this school too, I had the satisfaction of receiving the subscription of membership, before the close of the week). My next, and last visit for this day, was to St. Anne's, the parish Schools. My arrival was anticipated by our indefatigable Corresponding Secretary, Captain Dyer, R.N., who had promised on my behalf, two addresses; indeed, accustomed to work hard himself in anything in which he feels an interest, he took good care that we should do the same, arranged all our gatherings in Belfast, and most materially assisted in carrying them out. Nor was he one whit behind his neighbours, in that warm-hearted hospitality which everywhere greeted us. In accordance with his arrangement, I first delivered an address in the Boys' School, and subsequently, another in the Girls' School, in the presence of Rev. Dr. Miller, the Vicar. For earnest attention, I have seldom met with a more encouraging audience. I would fain hope that a word in season may have been spoken to the

comfort of some little one. A striking feature in Irish schools is the absence of class distinction, shoes or no shoes, good clothes or indifferent, making no apparent difference, but all sitting down to listen to their faithful teachers.

On the following morning, 20th Oct. we started, per first train, for Newry, arriving there in time to breakfast with the Vicar, the Very Rev. Daniel Bagot, Dean of Dromore, and Vicar-General of Newry and Morne. Here, as elsewhere, we experienced a cordial reception from the Dean and his estimable lady, both of whom expressed much interest in our work; indeed, the exertions of the Dean to secure a good meeting for us were of the heartiest character, he having invited all the clergy from the neighbouring towns, among whom, the Rector of Rostrevor, the Incumbent of Warren-point, and others attended. Considering the very inclement weather, a goodly number had arrived at the Deanery, at the time appointed, when the Dean opened the proceedings in the usual manner, and having introduced the deputation, called upon Mr. Norton to give a lesson to a Bible class. The lesson itself, as illustrative of thorough catechetical teaching, was admirable; and afforded great satisaction to all present. Much interest was added to it by the remarkably intelligent class which had been provided. When the lesson had been concluded, and the children dismissed, a long conversation ensued, during which our various Series of Lessons and other publications were thoroughly examined, and much commended for their simplicity and usefulness, no less than for their systematic arrangement. I ought to mention that Mrs. Bagot materially assisted us, for having personally used several of our Note Books, and being withal looked up to as one of the best teachers in Ireland (I heard her spoken of, at one of our meetings, as unmistakeably the best), her opinion and recommendation properly carried great weight. The three schools attached to the church are to be connected with the Institute, and I hope for several from the neighbourhood. I was compelled to leave somewhat early by train for Dungannon, *en route* for Aughnacloy, at which place, I was to attend alone on the morrow, Mr. Norton starting a little later for Enniskillen, the meetings at those places being unfortunately fixed for the same day. Arrived at Dungannon, and the rain, (which was our constant companion during the whole of our tour) having held up, I determined to start at once for Aughnacloy, fearing a cross-country wetting if I delayed till the morrow. So thoroughly did the rain accompany us, that as I gave free rein to my fancy, I likened it to Erin leaning on her harp, and weeping at the distress of her sister across the channel; and remembering the helping hand which had been extended to *her*, in *her* day of sore trouble, considering in the midst of her tears, how best she could offer some return. My journey, however, could only be accomplished by car, but with the assurance that my arrival a little earlier than expected, would not be misinterpreted, I started at once; nor was I disappointed, for the Ven. Archdeacon Stokes accorded me a real Irish welcome, and with Mrs. Stokes, and the various members of his family, sought how best they might secure my comfort. I little expected to meet, in this far away place, school statistics of so interesting and complete a character as I found there, and that too, in a country generally considered not over partial to statistics; but before I went to bed, the Archdeacon had explained to me the circumstances and plans of his schools, and laid before me at a glance, the whole particulars respecting them for the last twenty years. The number of scholars admitted, number not absent one Sunday in the year, number absent only once, number

confirmed, married, dismissed, indeed, all those details which add interest to a school and encourage a faithful pastor in his work. Aughnacloy itself is not a large place, but scholars come from a long distance, some as far as three miles, and those from the furthest distance are about the most regular in their attendance. Here, as elsewhere, the different grades in the school are mixed together, some of the children coming barefooted, while others are well-to-do and well-dressed. The grandson of the Archdeacon, a nice intelligent little fellow of four and a half years, is one of the Sunday scholars *his* father, the Rev. Thomas Stokes (the Senior Curate to the Archdeacon) conducting an advanced class of young men of different grades. The difficulty so often felt and dreaded in this country, from the mixture of classes, has no existence there, and they would consider any alteration in this respect a real misfortune. Many of their teachers are drawn from their schools.

On the following morning, Oct. 21st, under the escort of the Archdeacon, I visited successively his own Girls' and Infants' schools (the boys' school being in a state of preparation for our meeting) the Government Methodist School, and the Government Roman Catholic Schools, in all of which an amount of order prevailed, which contrasted favourably with my preconceived ideas. In the two Government schools there were naturally some things to which I could have taken exception, but on the other hand, there was evidence of work and progress. In the afternoon, our Meeting was held in the boys' schoolroom which had been embellished with evergreens, a temporary platform erected, and everything done to give it an air of unusual importance. The Ven. Archdeacon presided, and was supported by several clergy, some of whom had come from a long distance, and about one hundred teachers. After singing and prayer, the Chairman offered a short explanation of the objects of the meeting, and then called upon me to deliver a Training Lesson to an Elementary Class, composed of about twelve children, of all ages and sizes, and I think I may add of varied capacity. They were very attentive, and gave some excellent answers. In spite of the appeals of the Chairman as moderator, the criticisms offered were very few and very easily replied to. I was then requested to deliver an address to the teachers, when I took as my subject, "The Teacher's Aim," glancing at his responsibilities and difficulties. This naturally led me on to speak of the Institute, and I had an opportunity of explaining its objects, and operations, and I think of satisfying all present of the advantages which it offers to teachers. The Meeting closed with the benediction, after a vote of thanks for my visit, when the Archdeacon intimated, that although there would be no collection, Societies could not send deputations without expense, and if any of those present felt disposed to make him their Almoner, he would be happy to forward their donations to the proper quarter. He subsequently remitted to me in London, an amount entered as his school collection, but towards which he was evidently the largest donor. In the same letter, I learn that as a result of our deputation, the first Teachers' Meeting in the important town of Dungannon had just been held, and with manifest success. I ought to mention here, that our Institute has long been known to the Archdeacon, and that he is an old subscriber, and regularly takes in our publications, but that his schools are in connection with "The Society for Discountenancing Vice," an association with which we thus unintentionally appeared to come into competition, and of whose operations, I must candidly confess, I was totally ignorant. It appears, however, that it has existed for

many years, and largely assists schools in connection with it. Its plans appear to be somewhat as follows:—It arranges a Series of Lessons for the various classes, such as the Book of Genesis, and the Gospel of St. Luke combined. These are to form the subjects for instruction for the whole year, the mode of carrying out the plan being apparently left very much to the discretion of the teacher; and upon these books, at the end of the year, the scholars are examined by various clergy selected for that office, premiums being awarded to two in each class, for the best answers. The Society pays half the cost of these premiums, the school managers (generally, however, the clergymen), the other half. My own opinion is decidedly opposed to this method of distributing awards, but it was satisfactory to hear that at Aughnacloy the awards of the examiners almost invariably agree with the reports of the teachers. As to the Series of Lessons, I consider our own infinitely preferable, and am in some hope that that Society may eventually adopt our lessons, upon which to conduct their examinations.

The Archdeacon invited several of the Clergy to meet me at dinner, and thus afforded me further facilities for entering into details connected with our work. On the following morning, 22nd, I left Aughnacloy, deeply sensible of the kindness I had received, and fully satisfied that the proverbial hospitality of the denizens of the Emerald Isle, had not been overrated by previous visitors. Arrived at Glass Lough, where I was to take train for Armagh, I met my colleague, who had the same morning left Monaghan, having been the previous day at Enniskillen. The Meeting there was under the presidency of the Rector, Rev. Dr. Magee, who introduced Mr. Norton, as the representative of the Institute, and then called upon him to explain the principles and plans of the Institute, next to give a Training Lesson, and then an address. Among the audience, which included several Clergymen, was the Government Inspector of Schools for the district, mentally criticising, and apparently with considerable interest, the lesson which was being delivered. The style of teaching, the address, and the explanation, gave such general satisfaction, that the Rector proposed at once to adopt our lessons, and to put his school in connection with the Institute. As the guest of Dr. Magee, Mr. Norton had an additional opportunity of discussing the work of the Institute with several of the clergy.

Arrived at Armagh, we were at once received as the guests of the Rector, the Rev. Benjamin Wade, whose large and prosperous schools, like those at Aughnacloy, are in connection with "The Society for Discountenancing Vice;" and, certainly, considering the substantial advantages which it holds out to managers, it will not be matter of surprise that our host was not prepared all at once to admit the superiority of our system, which he did *not* know, as against that which he had already worked with considerable success. However, after a very full examination and friendly argument on the subject, I think I may venture to say that, to a great extent, he accepted our views, suggested that we should communicate with the Society referred to, in the hope that it might adopt our Lesson Papers as the basis of their examinations, and concluded by placing his schools in connection with the Institute. In the afternoon a most interesting and numerously attended Meeting was held in their spacious schoolroom. Its size may be judged of from the fact that they frequently have as many as 600 children in attendance, the majority being taught by efficient teachers. The Rector presided, and was supported by a large number of clergy, as well as teachers. After briefly introducing the subject of the

Meeting, and expressing the gratification it afforded him to welcome two gentlemen from the sister country, engaged in such a work as Sunday School instruction, a feeling enhanced, rather than otherwise, by the fact that they were laymen, he called upon me for an address, in which, at some length, I endeavoured to lay before them our various operations. Mr. Norton then delivered a Training Lesson, which was much appreciated, and afterwards an address to teachers. The usual vote of thanks succeeded, and then numerous enquiries were made for specimens of our Lessons and Note Books, so much so that our small stock was soon exhausted, and we were compelled to ask for the Rector's assistance in the distribution of a further supply, which we were glad to promise. Here, as at other places, some of the clergy were invited to meet us at the Rectory, thus affording us additional opportunities of furthering our cause. For this night I availed myself of the hospitality of the Rev. John Murray, LL.B, the senior curate, Mr. Norton being received by Mr. Wade.

The following morning we left Armagh, cheered as hitherto by our kind reception, in which we were not a little indebted to the ladies.

Our journey thence was to Belfast, where, at two o'clock, Mr. Norton delivered a Training Lesson to a Bible Class at Christ Church, Rev. R. Hanway presiding; and at three o'clock I delivered a Lesson to an Elementary Class at the Barrack Street Schools not far distant. The audience from the first, attended the second, and I believe the Lessons were generally acceptable. After this, we were the guests of the Rev. E. J. Hartrick, who, following the precedent so frequently given, invited several of the clergy to meet us previously to the great Meeting at Ulster Hall. For a report of that Meeting I had better refer you to the Belfast New's Letter; it was in all respects most encouraging, and paved the way for the flattering reception accorded to us at the Conference on the following day. Our good friend, Dr. Drew, presided, and was supported by the Very Rev. the Dean of Dromore, Dr. Miller, the Vicar of Belfast, Dr. Binney, of Bangor, Lieut.-Col. Child, and a long list of clergy and gentry too numerous to mention here. The enquiries were neither few nor far between, and we were much gratified by the many marks of sympathy shown to us, as well as pleased at the evident satisfaction with which our system was received by many present. On the following morning, October 24th, we breakfasted with the Bishop, and about 100 of his clergy; a few laymen besides ourselves being present. At the Conference which followed, and at which the subject of "Sunday schools" proved the most interesting and animated of the various topics discussed during the week, Mr. Norton entered fully into the operations of the Institute, my share in the proceedings being confined, for want of time, to the expression of our hope, that we should not leave Belfast without his Lordship's patronage, and that of the majority of his clergy, at the same time assuring them of our appreciation of the kind reception which everywhere greeted us. The patronage of the Bishop was granted a few minutes later.

Our last Meeting was held in the Music Hall in the evening. This was a Soirèe at which about 800 teachers were present, the Dean of Dromore in the chair. After tea the business part of the proceedings commenced, when I delivered an address, and Mr. Norton a Bible Class Lesson, to a class of young men and young women. Besides the Chairman and ourselves, the Revs. E. J. Hartrick, Charles Seaver, and Edward Maguire, and Captain Dyer, took part in the proceedings which were of a very enthusiastic character, and did not terminate till a late hour. The following morning we left

Belfast by first train, and called in Dublin, at the office of "The Society for Discountenancing Vice," where we had an interview with the Secretary, and thus concluded our official work in Ireland. What are to be the fruits of that work, time only can reveal.

To form even an approximate idea of the number of schools which may join our Institute, and thus exert an influence for good in the more systematic teaching of Revealed Truth, would be impossible; but this much I think I may say, that, as the call seemed to be irresistible, so the success graciously vouchsafed to us has been considerable, far exceeding our most sanguine expectations, and leading to the hope, as it does to the fervent prayer, that our labours may not have been "in vain in the Lord." Whatever the result may be, great or small, I am sure I am only expressing the feelings of my colleague when I say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake."

It would not be right for me to conclude without acknowledging our great obligations to the Lord Bishop of Down and Connor, and Dromore, for his kindness and patronage, as also to the various clergy and laity, who at once made us feel that we were with friends; nor should I omit to mention the Rev. Charles Seaver, of St. John's, Belfast, who has kindly undertaken the honorary office of Clerical Corresponding Secretary, so that, with our old friend Captain Dyer retaining his office, we have the clerical and lay element each ably represented; and now, committing all to the Fatherly hand of Him "without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy," I bring this lengthy epistle to a close,

And remain, Dear Sirs,
Very sincerely yours,
J. F. Reid.

[If I had not already exceeded the length I had intended, I should have liked to have drawn attention to some useful hints to Sunday School Teachers, published by the Sunday School Society for Ireland, and strengthening the views so constantly expressed by our own Society.—J. F. R.]

Plans and Intelligence.

TEACHERS' PRAYER UNION.

With the New Year, we invite all who are engaged in the work of the Sunday school to unite, on the Tuesday morning of each week, with their fellow-labourers, in presenting before the Throne of Grace special prayers for the Divine blessing upon themselves, for the children of their schools, and all those for whom it is their duty to pray. For two years past this plan has been pursued by a large number of the members of the Institute; and we are sure there are none who have adopted it but who have found themselves refreshed in their own souls, and we know that none ever ask anything which is according to God's will without being heard and graciously answered by Him.

Jan. 6.—*For all conditions of men*, and especially for those in our own land, now suffering from severe privation, that God may support and relieve them; and for the people of a distant country now at war, that they may be granted the blessings of peace.

Jan. 13.—*For the Church of England*, that it may keep the purity of the faith, and that its members may walk in holiness.

Jan. 20.—*For the spread of the Gospel* throughout the world among Jews and Gentiles, that they all may be speedily gathered into the fold of Christ.

Jan. 27.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, that its work may be blessed by God, and made instrumental for the improvement of religious teaching in our Sunday schools.

Feb. 3.—*For all Superintendents*, that they may, with wisdom and patience, order all things for the good of the teachers and scholars of our schools, to the promotion of God's glory.

Feb. 10.—*For all Sunday School Teachers*, that they may be earnest and single-minded in winning for Christ the souls of the children committed to their care.

Feb. 17.—*For all Sunday Scholars*, that their hearts may be opened to receive the seed of the Word of Life, and that it may bring forth fruit unto holiness.

Feb. 24.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, and especially that its Officers and Committee may be aided by the guidance of the Holy Spirit in all their plans and operations.

March 3.—*For our Queen and Rulers*, that they may order all things for God's glory, and possess the love and obedience of the people.

March 10.—*For the due observance of the Sabbath*, as a day holy unto the Lord, and of refreshing to the souls of men.

March 17.—*For Scholars who have passed into the world*, that they may hold fast the things which they have heard, and walk worthy of their profession.

March 24.—*For the Parents and Families of our Sunday Scholars*, that, as households, they may dwell in the fear of the Lord, and walk uprightly.

March 31.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, and especially that its publications may be kept free from all error of doctrine, and be blessed in leading teachers and scholars to the right understanding of the Word of God.

*** Copies of this Paper may be obtained free, on application by letter to the Editors, or personally at the Offices of the Institute, 41, Ludgate Hill, E.C.

MEETING OF THE LEEDS CHURCH INSTITUTE.

The annual re-union of the members and friends of the Leeds Church Institute and Sunday School Association took place in November, in the Victoria Hall, Leeds. About 1,200 persons took tea together, and afterwards the number present was increased by several hundreds. The attractions of the *soirée* were very much heightened by the presence of the recently elected Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of Ripon. The Archbishop presided

on the occasion, and on taking his seat received a hearty greeting from all present.

We regret that we have only space to quote His Grace's observations in reference to Sunday schools:—

"As regards the objects of the Church Institute, the first which appears is that it is connected with Sunday schools. Certainly that fact is enough to do away with those reproaches which once assailed the Church, that it was hostile to the education of the people. It leads undoubtedly to the conclusion that that reproach was undeserved; for on looking at past records, I find that while thirty years ago there were about 800 children educated in the schools of the Church in this town, now there are 13,000; and every Church in the town, thirty-six in number, has a school attached to it, save in two instances, and many of them have twice that number of schools. Now, I very well recollect when persons high in station, who ought to have known better, assailed the clergy with that reproach, but they have lived to retract it; and it is a great gratification to know that the Report of the Commissioners of Education bears the highest possible testimony to the self-denial of the clergy, and to the self-sacrifice of the clergy in particular, and bears witness that they contribute to schools more largely in proportion to their means than any other order or class in the state. But there is this advantage in Sunday schools, among others, that they are not attended with such expense as weekday schools, while their influence is felt in many ways, and is most valuable and most satisfactory. When we consider that there are three millions of children in Protestant Sunday schools at this time, under the instruction of three hundred thousand teachers, we may imagine what an amount of usefulness must be conveyed by such a machinery as that. And undoubtedly when the average age at which children leave school is far less than it used to be, the supplemental aid which Sunday schools give cannot be sufficiently appreciated. We can conceive what must be the value of the exertions of highly cultivated men, persons of refined minds, persons having weight of character and purity of principle, coming week after week in contact with those youthful minds, and forming them and influencing them for good, and turning them from evil, and training them in the way they should go, and leaving a blessing and lasting benefit on their minds and character. But besides that, I have often thought, and certainly have witnessed in the West Riding of Yorkshire, that this institution of Sunday schools is one which prospers in a remarkable degree, and one in which greater efficacy may be seen than elsewhere. I have been wont to consider it as one of the bands which knit society together—as supplying the place of that missing link which we hear so much of and which is wanted to blend and weld together the different classes, and to make them harmonise together; and as to how long that blending may last, and how long in this part of the world such a connection may continue, I will give you an instance. When I was preaching last year for my friend Archdeacon Musgrave, at Halifax, I remember after evening service, one of the Sunday school teachers came in and informed me that he had been *fifty years* engaged in Halifax in that capacity. Now, I think you may well consider *that* an example worthy of your imitation as far as possible, and of your highest praise and commendation."

Notices of Books.

It was a happy thought which prompted the Religious Tract Society to issue the "LETTERS OF WILLIAM COWPER, being a selection from his correspondence, with a sketch of his life, and biographical notices of his correspondents;" for while his Poems are deservedly popular, his Letters are comparatively little known, although they afford the clearest insight into his pure and benevolent mind, his gentle and sensitive (alas! too tenderly susceptible) nature, and abound in the expression of deep spiritual feeling and religious truth. The volume is, in all respects, a most attractive and valuable one.

"PERILS AMONG THE HEATHEN; or Incidents of Missionary Life, with a preface by the Rev. J. Ridgway, M.A." (London, Seeley) is a collection of records of Missionaries' trials in modern times, chiefly selected from their own journals and writings, to show how completely they follow in the course of the great Apostle of the Gentiles in the various perils to which they are exposed for the Gospel's sake. The book is full of interesting details, which cannot fail to incite in the young reader a desire to know more of the labours of such devoted men, and may by God's blessing awaken in them a deeper feeling of concern for the spread of the knowledge of the only Saviour among the heathen.

"OUR MORAL RELATION to the Animal Kingdom" (London: Morgan, and Chase, p.p. 16) contains a digest of the statements of the Bible, showing the original connexion in blessing between the inferior creatures and their human lord, and their subsequent share in the judgment upon mankind; and hence draws the inference that the protection of the defenceless portion of creation devolves upon us, if we would be "imitators of God as dear children." It is a valuable little tract, since it bases the duty of kindness to animals upon Divine authority, rather than upon human pity.

"COME OVER AND HELP US" is the title of a Report published by Mr. D. W. SCOTT, of "the Lord's work among some of the poor of Twigg Folly, Bethnal Green," in which he appeals for help in the good work in which he is engaged, of rendering temporal and spiritual assistance to the destitute poor of that locality.

In "REALITIES, or the manifestations of God in past ages, considered as earnests of the Future, by E. R." (London: W. YAPP, p.p. 272) the author has collected together a series of Scriptural studies from Genesis to Judges, prepared for use in a Bible class, and has by coloured type distinguished the portions of the narrative indicating man's sin, and God's judgments and mercies, from his own remarks. Unfortunately there is a want of clearness in the plan of the work, and a vagueness of meaning in several of its parts, which will militate against its usefulness as a manual for teachers, although it contains many excellent reflections, and practical applications, of Old Testament history to modern times.

Notices to Correspondents.

The following Contributions are thankfully acknowledged:—C. E. M.; F. C.; S. B.; J. M. C.; "Dora;" Rev. G. N. S.; Rana; Rev. T. J. J.; E. P.; Ellen; W. S.; J. G. F.; F. E. D.

The Editors will feel much obliged if their friends and Correspondents will forward any papers intended for insertion in the next number not later than the end of February.

Church of England

SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY

MAGAZINE.

1st APRIL, 1863.

The Teacher in his Closet.

A HANDFUL OF CORN FROM OLD FIELDS.

THE ATONEMENT.

What talk we of death? The wrath of God is truly the terriblest thing in the world,—the sting of sin, which is the sting of death. Look into our own souls, what weak apprehension of it we have,—what a night and darkness doth it draw over us! Nay, what a hell doth it kindle in us! What torments do we feel, the types and sad representations of those in the bottomless pit. But yet there is still a difference between our apprehension and Christ's. For, alas! to us God's wrath doth not appear in its full horror; for if it did we should sooner die than offend Him. To us, when we take it as the nearest and have the fullest apprehension of it, it appeareth but as the cloud to Elijah's servant, "like a man's hand;" but to Christ "the heavens were black with clouds and wind," and it showered down upon Him as in a tempest of fire. We have not His eyes, and therefore not His apprehension; we see not so much

deformity in sin as He did, and not so much terror in the wrath of God. Divers sinners have been delivered up to afflictions and crosses, nay, to the anger of God; but never any, nay not those who have despaired, were so delivered as Christ. For though Christ could not despair, yet the wrath of God was more visible to Him than to those who bear but their own burdens: whereas He lay pressed under the sins of the whole world, God in His approaches of justice, when He cometh towards the sinner to correct him, may seem to go, like the consul of Rome, with his rods and his axes carried before Him. Many sinners have felt His rod, and His rod is comfort; His frown favour; His anger love; and His blow a benefit. But Christ was struck as it were with His axe; others have trembled under His wrath, but Christ was even consumed by the stroke of His hand.

Farindon.

So rich a price was more than sufficient to ransom all the world from captivity: so goodly, so pure, so sweet, so precious a sacrifice might worthily expiate and atone all the guilt of men.

Barrow.

Bound upon th' accursed tree,
Faint and bleeding, who is He?
By the eyes so pale and dim,
Streaming blood and writhing limb,
By the flesh with scourges torn,
By the crown of twisted thorn,
By the side so deeply pierced,
By the baffled burning thirst,
By the drooping death-dew'd brow;—
Son of Man, 'tis Thou, 'tis Thou!

Bound upon th' accursed tree,
Dread and awful, who is He?
By the sun at noon-day pale,
Shivering rocks, and rending veil,
By earth that trembled at His doom,
By yonder saints who burst their tomb,
By Eden promised, ere He died,
To the felon at His side;—
Lord! our suppliant knees we bow,
Son of God, 'tis Thou, 'tis Thou!

Bound upon th' accursed tree,
Sad, and dying, who is He?
By the last and bitter cry,
The ghost giv'n up in agony;

By the lifeless body laid
In the chambers of the dead;
By the mourners come to weep
Where the bones of Jesus sleep;—
Crucified! we know Thee now!
Son of Man, 'tis Thou, 'tis Thou!

Bound upon th' accursed tree,
Dread and awful, who is He?
By the prayer for them that slew,
"Lord they know not what they do;"
By the spoiled and empty grave,
By the souls He died to save,
By the conquest He hath won,
By the saints before His throne,
By the rainbow round His brow;—
Son of God, 'tis Thou, 'tis Thou!

Milman.

That the sufferings of the Redeemer were vicarious and piacular, that He appeared in the character of a substitute for sinners, in distinction from a mere example, teacher, or martyr, is so unquestionably the doctrine of the inspired writers, that to deny it, is not so properly to mistake as to contradict their testimony: it must be ascribed not to any obscurity in revelation itself, but to a want of submission to its authority.

The doctrine in question is so often asserted in the clearest terms, and tacitly assumed as a fundamental principle in so many more, it is intermingled so closely with all the statements of truth, and inculcations of duty throughout the Holy Scriptures, that to endeavour to exclude it from revelation, is as hopeless an attempt as to separate colour from the rainbow, or extension from matter.

Every reflecting person must perceive that there is in this doctrine something extremely remote from ordinary apprehension, apart from the instruction derived from Holy Writ. That *one of the human race*, by submitting to an ignominious and painful death, should be the moral source of the salvation of an innumerable multitude of mankind, and if duly improved, a sufficient source for the salvation of all, is surely one of the most extraordinary of the divine proceedings with regard to man. Nothing like this has ever existed. It seems to stand by itself, an isolated department of Divine Providence, to contain within itself a method of acting which was never seen before, and will never be repeated.

Robert Hall.

For this is life eternal, to know our only God, and Him whom He hath sent, Jesus Christ, in whom He hath appointed the beginning, midst, and end of our salvation. This is Isaac, the well-beloved Son of the Father, who was offered in sacrifice, and yet gave not place to death. This is the vigilant shepherd Jacob, which took so great care over the sheep he had in keeping. This is the good and merciful brother Joseph, who in his glory was not ashamed to acknowledge his brethren, were they never so base and abject. This is the great high priest and bishop, Melchizedec, who made an everlasting sacrifice once for all. This is the excellent law-maker Moses, who writeth His law upon the tables of our hearts by His Spirit. This is the faithful captain and guide Joshua, to conduct us into the land of promise. This is the noble and victorious king David, smiting down with his hand all rebellious power. This is the magnificent and triumphing king Solomon, governing his kingdom in peace and prosperity. This is the strong and valiant Samson, who by his death overthrew his enemies. And last of all, every good thing which heart can think of, or desire, is found in this only Jesus Christ; for He humbled Himself to exalt us, and became servant to make us free; He was impoverished to enrich us; He was sold to ransom us; He became prisoner to bail us; He was condemned to deliver us; He was made the curse for our blessing; an offering for sin, for our righteousness; He was disfigured to fashion us; He died for our life. Inasmuch by Him roughness is smoothed, anger appeased, darkness lightened, unrighteousness justified, weakness strengthened, sin bridled, debt paid, and to be short, mercy hath swallowed up all misery, and bounty hath overcome all evil.

Calvin, from Preface to the Geneva Bible.

Man tries gradually to lessen the distance between himself and God, by his own doings; God annihilates it at once, by the doings of another, which accomplished in a moment that which a whole eternity of doings could not have enabled man to effect. Man tries by endless instalments to pay the eternal debt which has cast him into prison, and made him an alien from his Creator; God comes forth, and in one sum pays the infinite debt, and the prisoner goes free. Man tests religion by its morality, or its earnestness, or its seemly forms. But the Divine criterion is the recognition of this great foundation.

Bonar.

From our birth we are the avowed enemies of God, daily fighting against Him, and disputing His authority over us; consequently

we all lie under the sentence of *death* even the *death of the soul.* Now for the *soul* to *die*, is not for it to become stiff and cold and inanimate, as the body does before it is laid in the dark and loathsome grave; but it means a total and irrevocable separation from God, who is the very essence of love, and all, and far more than the mind of man can conceive, as most lovely in character; whose throne is in heaven where all is holiness, and new and ever increasing happiness; and it also includes a close and abiding union with Satan, whose name means adversary or enemy, *our* adversary or enemy. Now he is the very embodiment of all that is wicked; and his abode is of such a fearful character, that the "lake burning with fire and brimstone" is but a faint simile of what its torments actually are; and its depth is so deep, that it is called "the bottomless pit," this signifying that the faculties of the soul will for ever be expanding, even in hell, and thus it will always be reaping increased misery—all its inhabitants will be hateful, and hating one another, whilst vain regrets for having "counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing" will fill their cup of trembling to the brim; for none will be there who might not have been in heaven. But how is this? Ere sin had been committed, God foresaw the fall; and knowing that man would thus become incapable of perfect obedience for the future, or of atoning in any way for past trangressions, He, with a love which "passeth knowledge," devised a plan of salvation whereby even He could be just in not punishing the sinner, by finding a *substitute* for man, who should undergo much suffering. God cannot have His laws, which are "holy, just, and good," trampled under foot with impunity; and if the debtors to the law are to be saved the debt due for breaking the law must be paid. But where is the substitute to be found? It would be sought for in vain upon the earth, "for in Adam all have sinned." The angels were *created* beings, and though spotless were capable of falling from their high estate, like those who had already been thrust out of heaven; so they came not forward on man's behalf. But One there was in that glorious assembly, not *created* but *begotten*; co-existent with the Father before time, and filling all space, "and upholding all things be the Word of His power," who cries out, "I will ransom them from death." And from whom does that voice proceed? Even from the Son of God, whom He is willing should by "the one sacrifice of Himself," satisfy His justice, and save the sinner. And how could He do this? Only by taking man's nature upon Him, and doing as man, all that man ought to have done. Whilst losing nothing of His Divinity, He is truly man; and thus He first of all obeys the law, which He is able to do, because He is God, perfectly holy and incapable of sinning; and then in the nature of man which

He has taken "into God," He suffers the punishment due to man for having broken it. He is that "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," "by whose stripes we are healed." This is the great fundamental doctrine of the Bible, known as the "*Atonement*;" which was represented and kept alive in the minds of the Jews by the sacrificing of animals, the blood of these animals being the emblem of Christ's blood.

Christ's mission on earth is accomplished; "It is finished," were the last words He uttered in suffering humanity, when "He bowed His head and gave up the ghost." And surely sweeter words never wrung in mortal ears than these. What is finished?—*The Atonement.* Full satisfaction has been made to God for sin—perfect obedience has been rendered to the law; and now, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

A. E. Simpson.

There was never yet found, and never will be found, any way of rest or safety for the soul, but by Christ. And this is the old path, the good way of the prophet Jeremiah (vi. 16). The Apostle, indeed, calls it "a new and living way," (Heb. x. 20)—as having then received new and fuller illustration; yet it is a way as old as the fall; as old as the creation; and indeed, in the purpose and foreknowledge of God, older than the creation. There is no older way than this, nor any so safe; there is no other indeed that is safe. It was not then, when the Apostle wrote, a way newly opened, for it existed before all time; nor was it then newly revealed, for it had been made known to man so soon as he had fallen; nor was it then newly made use of, for all the Old Testament saints were saved by the same grace of Christ, and justified by His righteousness, and their sins pardoned through His blood, and expiated by His sacrifice, the same as those who lived under the New Testament. In those latter days, this ancient path had been more clearly shown, and more fully opened up, just as now, many an old road is opened up to the sun and air by the removal of the dense foliage that grew on either side, and met overhead, admitting only here and there some stray beams of the sun, and allowing only a few glimpses of the clear blue sky. In all time there is but one way of salvation, there never was any other, and never will be. It is, therefore, our course, as it was formerly, still to enquire for the old path, the good old way, the pleasant way of Christ.

Dr. Kitto.

The question is not whether God can do it if He will—but will He do it though He can—*i.e.*, pardon us, without satisfaction having been made.

Beveridge.

Christ sat down, when? Not till He had purged, *i.e.*, made atonement for our sins, and paid for whatever holiness or purging grace His people might want; and that one offering of Himself once for all, was of such infinite value that it perfectly purchased the taking away of sin, both in the filth, guilt, and power; and was a sufficient price for all the grace believers should need for their perfect sanctification to the end of the world.

Charnock.

Man's soul was ruined by the fall; the image of God was defaced; man's nature was corrupted, and he became dead in sin. The design of God by the atonement of Jesus Christ was to restore the soul of man; to restore life, and the image of God in conversion; and to carry on this work in sanctification, until he should perfect it in glory. Man's body was ruined; by the fall it became subject to death. The design of God was to restore it from the ruin, and not only to deliver it from death by the resurrection, but to deliver it from mortality itself in making it like Christ's glorious body. The world at the fall was ruined as to man, as effectually as if it had been reduced to chaos again, all heaven and earth were overthrown. But the design of God was to restore all by the redemption, and as it were to create a new heaven and a new earth.

President Edwards.

When the fulness of time was come, after the frequent repetition of promises, the expectation of the Jewish nation, the longings and tedious waitings of all holy persons, the departure of "the sceptre from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet;" when the number of Daniel's years was accomplished, and the Egyptian and Syrian kingdoms had their period:—God having great compassion towards mankind, remembering His promises and our great necessities, sent His Son into the world to take upon Him our nature, and all that guilt of sin which stuck close to our nature, and all that punishment which was consequent to our sin.

Jeremy Taylor.

Christ leads not in heaven a life of mere glory, majesty and blessedness, but a life of office, love, and care also; He lives as the Mediator of the Church; as the king, priest, and prophet thereof.

Dr. Owen.

The death of Christ was not absolutely necessary, but conditionally. It supposeth the entrance of sin, for after it had entered into the world, there was need of a propitiation; for an infinitely pure God could not have communion with an impure creature, and it was not fit a sovereign majesty should make Himself savingly known to His creatures without a propitiatory.

Charnock.

Christ stands between the wrath of God and the sin of man, intercepting the one and purging the other.

Fuller.

SPRING.

See, Spring arrives!
The buds expand, and every latent thing,
At her light touch, wakes up from winter's sleep.
Once the Creator said, "While earth remains,
Seed-time and harvest shall not cease their course;
And winter's frost shall follow summer's heat,
Itself be followed on by heat again;
Day take the place of night, and night of day,
With endless rolling tide." And so it has been,
And is, continual change, never to end
Till that dread hour when time shall be no more.
O child of nature, this same rolling tide,
Doth bear *thee* with it! Nor canst thou resist,
Thou canst not linger, thou must onward,—on,—
Without a moment's pause. Where does it flow?
Dost thou not fear? Seest thou the awful gulf
Of vast eternity, yawning to swallow straight
Each tiny atom that bears mortal name?
Lost trembling child of earth, this very hour
May thee precipitate into its depths.
Art thou a guide to others? Dost thou teach
Young ones the way to heaven? Feeble child,
Open thine eyes—behold the awful brink
Is well-nigh reached, and thou, too, well-nigh *lost!*
Believest thou? Then raise the urgent cry,
"Save, Lord—I perish!" Ah, that heart-wrung cry
Was never vainly uttered! See, e'en while
The air receives the sound, a Mighty Hand
Is stretched out to save, a thrilling Voice
Speaks to thine anxious heart—"I am the Way;
Fear not."

Henceforth, O rescued child of man,
Walk in no other way, seek safety in
No other arm; for it is written in
The Book of Light, "Blessed are they that trust
Jehovah; like as Zion's Mount is fixed
Immoveable, so also shall they stand
Secure from ev'ry danger." "Blest is he
That feareth God, that walketh in His ways."
Peace is now thine; let praise be on thy lips,
And in thy life. While time is granted thee,
Spend it in warning others from the road
Of swift destruction; tell, in David's words,
How Christ did pity thee, for His name's sake:—
"In my distress I cried unto the Lord;
From His high throne He heard, and rescued me.
Therefore lift I mine eyes unto the hills
From whence salvation comes. God is my help,
Who made the earth and heavens."

Zion's King
Will never slumber; He that keepeth thee
Shall ward off evil, and thy soul preserve;—
Preserve thy going out, thy coming in,
From this time forth, even for *evermore*.

Rana.

SUBMISSION TO AUTHORITY.

As Sunday school teachers, we are not simply employed in making known to our scholars the articles of the Christian faith (although that is a chief part of our task), but are also engaged in implanting principles of action, which are to guide them in their daily life, and guard them against the temptations which the evil example of others may present.

As this is our purpose, so it will be our care to observe the prevailing tendencies of the times in which we live, that we may counteract, as far as we possibly can, in our own sphere of labour, those characteristics which are likely to be injurious, and promote any which are calculated to advance the cause of truth and holiness. Each age and generation seem to have some special mark—some weakness conspicuously displayed, or some impulse in the right direction more prominent than the rest. We shall do well to observe such "signs of the times," and weighing them all in the balance of the sanctuary, we may find that it will be our duty, in

the religious teaching of the young, especially to direct our efforts to check that which we may find to be a prevailing evil in our own day.

Of such a nature, we think it will be allowed, is the spirit of insubordination which characterises the young especially, in these times. We find it not only, or chiefly, among the poor and ignorant, but equally among the better educated and wealthy; and so conspicuous is it in all ranks of society, that the satirists of the day have deemed it worthy of their especial notice. Submission one to another is the Christian duty of us all;—but there is a respect due from the young to the aged which is now rarely rendered, and the principle that it is a positive duty to "rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man" (Lev. xix. 32), is scarcely recognised. Respect to parents, *as such*, is yet more manifestly enjoined as a part of God's eternal law, and is *the* commandment to which a promised blessing is especially attached; yet we all know that at no period was this law so flagrantly disregarded as it is now. The very titles by which they are spoken of show how little of reverence, not to say affection, is felt; while the independence of their authority which is now so early manifested, the desire to enter upon the business or pleasures of life as soon as possible, to quit home and its restraints, and to be uncontrolled, which is acted upon by boys and girls who would be thought men and women,—all indicate how completely the duty of submitting to parental authority and control is ignored. Nor does the evil stop here; for, as the law of obedience to father and mother is the basis of that upon which submission to the Sovereign and her ministers of government and law, to teachers, spiritual instructors, and masters, is based, so we shall find that where this command is disregarded, there is also a want of respect exhibited to all office and authority, *as such*, and an attempt is made to distinguish between those who are deserving of honour, and those from whom it should be withheld, according to the judgment of each individual, forgetting that it is to *the office* the respect is due, distinct from the personal character of him who fills it. "The powers that be" are to be held in honour, *because* they are those powers; and St. Peter, when he said, "Honour the King," could not have meant that we should honour simply the character of a good king, for the emperor then living, Nero, was so despicable and brutal in all things that he could personally have no claim to respect. It is manifest, therefore, that when heathen rulers and magistrates were those to whom the Apostles ordered the Christians to pay reverence and tribute, it was not to their persons, but to their office the honour was to be rendered; and that when we make their office nothing, and mete out our respect according to

our estimate of the character of the holder of the office, we are not submitting to authority, for its own sake, in the manner required of us in Holy Scripture.

The spirit of insubordination which prompts to these exhibitions of disrespect to authority, insidiously undermines the foundations of religion itself. God is continually revealed to us in Scripture as our heavenly Father; and the very analogy between respect to earthly parents, and reverence for our Father which is in heaven, leads from the violation of the earthly obligation to the neglect of the spiritual one. The habit of setting up our judgment to decide on the amount of submission which we should render to those set over us as rulers, engenders a similar feeling in higher things, and leads to the frequent attempts to impugn the authority of the word of God, which unhappily distinguish our own days, when in the pride of intellect, and in the consciousness of the advance which science has made in modern times, these are wickedly employed against the word of God, and set up as sufficient substitutes for its light and truth.

What can we do, as Sunday school teachers, to counteract this evil? It is surely one worthy our consideration, and within our province. The foundation of all human claims to the respect of others rests upon the Divine law, and where its authority is truly recognised, submission to those set over us by the Lord will be cheerfully rendered, and the honour due to age, to parents, to rulers, and all under whom we are placed, will be freely given. Let it be a special point in our teaching, then, to show, by the plain words of Scripture, that it is the duty of the young to respect the aged, and to give them what help and support they can; that the authority of parents is not to be questioned nor slighted; that the honour due to them is commanded by God Himself, who promises a special blessing to those who render it, and will punish those by whom it is withheld; that it is contrary to the example of our Divine Master when on earth, and of His Apostles, to measure the degree of obedience to be rendered to masters, teachers, or public authorities, by any estimate we may form of their worth, but that we are bound to render respect to their office and position, and to "render to all their due," in submission and reverence. By thus placing the relative duties of daily life on their true basis, as done unto the Lord, and in obedience to His will, we are most likely to succeed in implanting in the minds and hearts of our scholars that spirit of submission to authority, which it is so especially necessary in our own day to cultivate, in order to stem, as far as may be, the spirit of independence of all authority which seems to have arisen, as a recoil from that blind and servile subjection to it which pre-

vailed in former times. The earthly practice of this grace may then be coupled with its heavenly counterpart—the submission of the soul to God; and the respect given to the earthly parents and governors may be joined to the spiritual duty of reverence to our heavenly Father, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

Need we say, that this subject has also a practical lesson for ourselves? In this, as in all other positive duties, example does much to strengthen and enforce our precepts; and while we think too highly of our fellow-labourers in the Sunday school to suppose that *they* would not render gladly, as "unto the Lord," the honour due to parents and all those to whom it is a manifest duty to submit, yet would we urge them especially to cultivate a spirit of mutual forbearance one towards another "in honour preferring one another,"—a cheerful recognition of the authority of their superintendents, and a willing submission to the directions of the clergy in whose schools they labour;—that the little ones who are so observantly watching them, may never have a pretext for an insubordinate spirit in those who should be as much examples to, as instructors of their scholars.

M. S.

PUNCTUALITY.

METHOD, as Mrs. More says, is the very hinge of business; and there is no method without punctuality. Punctuality is important because it subserves the peace and good temper of a family; the want of it not only infringes on necessary duty, but sometimes excludes this duty. Punctuality is important as it gains time; it is like packing things in a box; a good packer will get in half as much more as a bad one. The calmness of mind which it produces is another advantage of punctuality; a disorderly man is always in a hurry, he has no time to speak with you, because he is going elsewhere; and when he gets there, he is too late for his business, or he must hurry away to another before he can finish it. It was a wise maxim of the Duke of Newcastle—"I do one thing at the time." Punctuality gives weight to character—"Such a man has made an appointment; then I know he will keep it." And this generates punctuality in you; for like other virtues, it propagates itself; servants and children must be punctual, where their leader is so. Appointments, indeed, become debts; I owe you punctuality, if I have made an appointment with you, and have no right to throw away your time if I do my own.

From the Life and Remains of the Rev. Richard Cecil, M.A.

THE USE OF THE TONGUE AND THE PEN.

Both the Tongue and the Pen are possessions of great importance—gifts, the use of which God has bestowed exclusively upon mankind, whereby to communicate their thoughts and ideas to others. The gift of speech is as important as it is varied in its application—it may be made an instrument of good or of evil—of blessing or cursing—of worship or blasphemy—of kindness or cruelty;—indeed, the powers of the tongue range almost over as wide a dominion as the powers of the brain, and are nearly commensurate with the vastness of thought. All the members and senses are affected by its impulse, and act by its direction; for scarcely anything is done among us without its aid. Friendship derives its sweetest joys from the mutual converse of those who thus interchange the feelings of their hearts; in the world, its business is transacted through the same agency; in the church, the great truths of the Gospel are proclaimed by the tongues of men; in the family circle, prayer and praise are offered, affection expressed, consolation given, instruction imparted, by this "little member."

Because it is so common, and so constantly in use, we may be disposed to undervalue it as a possession, and to forget the responsibility attaching to its exercise. Yet when we see how often the power of speech is mis-applied—how frequently it is made the medium of evil to others, by false accusation, ill-tempered remarks, unkind reproaches, levity, or by suggesting that which is unholy or impure—how often it is used to dishonour God, to blaspheme its Maker, to speak against His truth, His judgments, or His Providence—we may well take up the resolve of the Psalmist, and say with him, "I will take heed to my ways, that I offend not with my tongue," seeing that St. James has given us a terrible picture of the evil which may arise from such offences (James iii. 5—10) and that our Lord has taught us the value of our words in *His* sight, when He said, "I say unto you that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." St. Paul, too, has given us an exhortation to the same purpose, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

Obviously, the highest employment for the human voice is that of praising the Author of its being: "I will sing and give praise with the best member that I have." In drawing near to God to pour out

our hearts before Him—to confess our sins, to tell our wants, to recount our mercies, our tongues find their holiest theme and noblest exercise. Next to this is to follow the impulse which prompted the Apostles of old, "we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard," and like them to tell of God's wondrous works, and of the salvation which He has provided for mankind in His beloved Son, to all who are brought within our influence. Love for immortal souls should make us anxious to make known to them the way of salvation;—the thought of others "perishing for lack of knowledge," should remove any natural timidity we might feel in speaking of such topics to those around us;—and, as "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," should prove a test whereby to measure our own real interest in such things. The *way* of doing this, will, of course, require to be carefully studied, lest we should not only defeat our own object, but give offence to the hearers:—the courtesy and kindness, the gentleness and patience, which should at all times adorn the Christian character, all come especially into exercise when we would endeavour, in general society, to lead the conversation to subjects of a religious character. This is to carry out the injunction of the Apostle, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt." It cannot be necessary that we should state that the opposite error should be avoided, and that no sanction should ever be given by the professed Christian to those who "make a mock at sin" by joining in the laugh so often raised, when its folly and penalty are spoken of.

In our office as Sunday school teachers, the tongue is the spring by which the wheels of all our efforts are set in action. In this blessed labour "words make truth to spangle and its rays to shine," and the right use of them is attended with results, which only eternity can reveal. "Pleasant words are as an honey-comb, sweet to the soul and health to the bones," and, received into young minds, they are the wings of actions, leading them onward and upward into the path of light. In times of sorrow or of suffering

> "Apt words have power to 'suage
> The tumults of a troubled mind,
> And are as balm to fester'd wounds;"

and, by them, those who would otherwise have sunk into hopeless misery and sin, have been led to look upward and take heart again. How sweet the privilege to tell of a Saviour's love—to enlist the young on the side of truth, to lead them to seek God as their Father, and His Word as their guide in life, their hope in death, and their portion for eternity! But while thus employed, how needful to be

on our guard, that, by no ill-timed, hasty, or injudicious word, we mar the good we seek to accomplish, or sting and wound the heart and mind which is brought under our influence to build up in our most holy faith, and thus to repel, rather than to win by gentle persuasion, the soul for Him whose words were so all-powerful to convince and to effect His will, that even His enemies exclaimed, "Never man spake like this man."

In the ordinary course of daily life, it is not required of us that we should abstain from taking part in the discussion of all the topics which may arise from time to time, or that we should never converse but on religious subjects; on the contrary, we may make the events happening around us, the themes of passing interest to the world, valuable to ourselves, by thus acquiring information which we may use profitably for ourselves and others, or may be the means of directing the consideration of those about us from earthly topics to higher themes. It is of all things necessary, that whenever argument arises, the discussion should be pursued with Christian meekness, and that no angry temper should be exhibited, or excited in others, and no compromise of truth made in order to gain the advantage of an opponent. It has been said that the true art of conversation, is to say the right thing at the right place, and to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment. No endeavour to force others to listen to us should be resorted to, for

> "Conversation, choose what theme we may,
> And chiefly where religion leads the way,
> Should flow, like waters after summer show'rs,
> Not as if raised by mere mechanic powers."

Nor, as Sir Walter Scott observed, does the pith of conversation "consist in exhibiting your own superior knowledge on matters of small importance, but in enlarging, improving, and correcting the information you possess by the authority of others." Dr. Johnson, whose own conversational powers were of the highest order, has said that "no style is more extensively acceptable than the narrative, because this does not carry an air of superiority over the rest of the company, and therefore is most likely to please them; for this purpose we should store our memory with short anecdotes, and entertaining pieces of history. Almost every one listens with eagerness to extemporary history. Vanity often co-operates with curiosity, for he that is a hearer in one place, wishes to qualify himself to be a principal speaker in some inferior company, and therefore more attention is given to narrations, than anything else in conversation. It is true, indeed, that sallies of wit, and quick

replies, are very pleasing in conversation, but they frequently tend to raise envy in some of the company; but the narrative way neither raises this, nor any other evil passion, but keeps all the company nearly upon an equality, and, if judiciously managed, will at once entertain and improve them all."

That which is true of the use and importance of speech, and the responsibility attaching to its exercise, is true also of the pen, by which we are able to make our words reach farther, and to spread them wider than our voices can ever send them. When spoken, the air disperses their sound, and they are quickly lost; but that which is written is permanent and enduring, extending to times, and places, and persons, which the voice could never reach. Thus "being dead" many a man "yet speaketh," and the pen is thus "a lasting memory," "the immortality of speech." This mode of expressing thought may be made,—as it is,—a means of disseminating God's truth, of guiding and teaching the ignorant, of recovering the wayward, comforting the afflicted, and cheering the faint; it can reach those afar off, over whom we can exercise no influence by the power of our voice; while it is also an important means of mental self-culture. The habit of committing our thoughts to paper is a means of expanding the mind, giving accuracy to our conceptions, and method and arrangement to our ideas and opinions. Nor does it require, as some think, a peculiar faculty to exercise this gift usefully for ourselves and others. Southey used to say that "a man with a clear head, a good heart, and an honest understanding, will always write well," and advised any one who wished to acquire a good style never to think about it, but to "say what he has to say as perspicuously as he can, and then the style will take care of itself."

In the ordinary exercise of the powers of writing—its social character, in correspondence with distant friends, or those with whom we wish to hold converse, when we cannot meet them—the way of uttering our thoughts is not studied, but is the spontaneous expression of our thoughts in the words we should use in speaking to those whom we address. Yet, even in this contracted exercise of the pen, how much good can be effected—how much happiness conferred! As teachers in the Sunday school, we may use this means of keeping up our influence over scholars no longer under our immediate control, who have removed from our own neighbourhood, or gone into a distant land, but to whom our words of counsel or encouragement would still be valuable. Many of my readers may be able to recall such instances in their own experience, as I can now do in mine, of boys and girls, now men and women, who still write to me, and look forward with pleasure to receiving a letter from their former friend in the Sunday school. And we may still keep up our

friendship with fellow-labourers of past years, now scattered, by the same means. Many enduring ties are formed among those who meet together, from week to week, in this labour of love; circumstances will part and widely separate them, but by the use of the pen we can preserve the link of Christian brotherhood unbroken.

In this suggestion, however, we speak of a very limited exercise of the means of influence which the power of writing places within our reach. The invention of printing has added a new engine of strength to the powers of the pen, and multiplies indefinitely the copies of the written page. Thus our experience, our thoughts, our plans, and the results of our studies or researches may be speedily communicated to all around us, be they near or far off, and that which is written in the quiet solitude of our chamber may be circulated as far as the language in which we write is known. May we not, according to the ability God has given us, exercise this talent of the use of the pen, in His service, and for the good of our fellow-men? May we not tell to others that which we have learned; record our own progress in knowledge, and our own assurance of the reality of the Divine life; remove, by the warning of our example in failure, some of the stumbling blocks out of the way of others; or shed light, by recalling our own means of strength and support, and our own conquests over evil and difficulty, upon the dark way of others, who, like us, are striving for the mastery, and are seeking to gain the victory? Ought we not to endeavour to take our part, in these days of many readers and of many books, to spread abroad God's truth, and extend the knowledge of that Saviour who has loved us with an exceeding love, and whom in gratitude we are bound to serve and honour with every faculty and opportunity he has granted to us?

M. S.

THE DEATH OF THE SAINT.

Tread lightly! 'Tis a sacred, solemn hour—
A Christian is departing. A spirit
Meet for heaven, is about to join
Her kindred spirits round the throne of God.
Angels on wings invisible attend,
And hover o'er the scene; waiting to bear
The ransom'd soul from this its house of clay
Up to the holy Paradise of God.
And as they wait, they sing in strains most sweet,
Celestial strains, that reach the dying ear!
See how the calm sweet face lights up with more
Than heavenly beauty, and the quiv'ring lips
Murmur the words, "Come, Jesus, quickly come!"

Wellingborough. M. A. S.

THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHING ON CHARACTER.

In considering this subject, I purpose, first, making a few remarks on the *fact* of influence as an inevitable result of our intercourse with our fellow-creatures. "No man liveth to himself," because every act of our lives must have a certain effect in forming the characters of those around us. This arises from the wondrous susceptibility of the human mind to impressions, which are, indeed, as instantaneous and unavoidable as effects upon our bodily organs.

Just as the eye cannot avoid the reflection of an object presented to it, so the mind inevitably receives its impressions. And this result is, of course, mutual between individuals holding intercourse together; so that the most trivial interchanges produce their permanent effects.

But I would wish to notice, that as this influence is real, so it is quite beyond our control. While our conversation and character produce their results, whatever our desire to neutralise them may be, it is quite out of our power to do so. Hence our Lord's warning, "A city which is set upon a hill *cannot* be hid."

We cannot restrain the good or evil influence of our characters, whether pernicious or beneficial. We cannot so live to ourselves as that the effects of our good or evil habits shall be limited to our own personal experience.

It is a startling thought that we carry about with us influences which may affect the destinies of some of our fellow-men—a power subject to our direction, but independent of our volition, which, by the very design and arrangement of God, is made to be the instrument of good or evil, assisting in the one case to promote the reward of the righteous, and in the other the doom of the wicked; and that we cannot escape from this law, nor from its consequent responsibilities. But while to all of us the thought must give an awful importance and solemnity to life, to the ungodly only it is portentous; while to the Christian, with his filial disposition towards God, it affords a glorious view of his calling.

Now, the effect of influence is to change, in some degree, the object of it, and by this its power may be estimated. It cannot be doubted that the teacher influences the child; but will not the child exert its influence upon the teacher? And I suggest this because some of our errors and failures may arise from underrating or despising the power which children possess to affect our own characters.

It may not be safe to conclude that all is necessarily good which results to ourselves from our attempts to teach. That must depend,

in some measure, upon our knowledge of children, but chiefly upon our expectations and motives in teaching them. To one who sets about the engagement as an easy and pleasing performance of duty, of which the process is something like the diffusion of fragrance, influence stealing out from the teacher upon the taught, without effort and without resistance, the undertaking would issue in disappointment and evil.

We must, indeed, remember, that in dealing with children we place ourselves in contact and in conflict with will, and intelligence and passion, forming a power which may operate sensibly upon ourselves. I therefore submit that caution and watchfulness are necessary, in order that the difficulties and disappointments of teaching children may not have an injurious effect upon our own characters.

Unless we are strong ourselves, the power of evil may be triumphant, and we may come off vanquished, like the bishop who, being sent against the Zulu, lost all his self-possession, and returned from his mission shorn of his faith. Not, however, that there is much danger of losing our own religion by engaging in Sunday school teaching; but we may easily suppose the case of one entering upon the work with a true apprehension of its nature, but, under the influence of disappointment, throwing up his confidence in the co-operation of the Spirit of God.

But our great purpose is to influence or change the natural character of children in favour of religion; and I think it is of great importance to define this particular christian duty. It is not a mere undertaking to teach, in the ordinary sense of tuition, but the performance of a spiritual act upon a spiritual being; the exertion of one kind of power—spiritual power—against another kind—the power of evil. Success must, therefore, depend upon the possession, on the part of the teacher, of spiritual power, a power which has but one source—the Spirit of God in the soul.

In the great band of Sunday school teachers there will ever be two classes, those who teach *merely*, and those who influence; and both may be made instrumental to spiritual effects, for we cannot doubt that mere instruction may be used by the Spirit of God as a means of conversion. But as agencies, the difference would lie in the means employed. In the one case, teaching would be made the instrument, and in the other, the personal character and influence of the teacher. Without presuming to say that the former is useless, I will venture a few remarks upon the advantages of the latter, both to the teacher and the taught.

When a teacher's influence is thrown into the work, it is brought to bear upon the character of the children. And this is peculiarly suit-

able to a Sunday school, which is constituted on the principle of some voluntary mutual feeling between the children and their teachers. The act on the part of the teacher is one of pure beneficence and kindness; and when the children can be made to apprehend this, a power is at once put into operation of the most efficient kind, because one which gives them a motive to obedience and respect, viz., that which flows from gratitude and love. We may contrast it with mere teaching, so much of which consists in imposing patience and restraint upon the child.

And here we come at once to one of the points of our subject—the effect of this influence upon the character of the children. For if we draw out their feelings, we affect their hearts; if we gain their goodwill and affection, we may feel that we have *prepared ground* upon which we may hopefully cast the good seed. And this interchange of kindness will have an important effect upon the spirit in which the work, both of teaching and being taught, is entered upon, making it something better than a disagreable ordeal, and surrounding it with the elements of enjoyment and privilege.

Many of the children enter the school spoiled, not by the indulgences but by the errors, and, perhaps, the severities, of their parents. They have commenced life under terrible disadvantages, those, it may be, of contact with lowest vice and evil example, which have begun to vitiate and disfigure their characters. Now, it is the part of the Sunday school teacher to endeavour to remedy these; to unlearn, as well as to teach; to meet the effect of churlishness and severities at home by kindness in the school; of bad passions, by the display, and not the mere inculcation, of Christian temper.

This kind of action upon the character of the children is clearly not in the shape of mere teaching, but of personal influence, imparting, rather than teaching, character, by the operation of an unseen but sure process, by which character assimilates to character. And in thus dealing with the effects of vicious home influences, we may take encouragement from the fact that the teacher has his advantages, for we know that in the homes of the poor the immediate effect of parental vice is to involve the children in misery and suffering. In such dwellings how seldom can the accents of sympathy and kindness be heard! How hopefully then may we look upon the influence of the Christian teacher who surrounds all his instructions with attractions which, in the experience of the children, must so strikingly contrast with the miseries of home!

I conclude with a few remarks upon the good influence of teaching upon our own characters. We can never seriously handle

Christianity without being sensible of its effects upon ourselves; and there is, probably, no engagement in the Christian Church more conducive to the development of spiritual character than Sunday school teaching. Perhaps too much is said of the sacrifices and trials which it involves, especially in giving up a portion of the day of rest. But need the work be undertaken in the spirit of sacrifice? We can hardly compare the pleasures of inaction and repose on the Sabbath with those higher advantages which result from the activities of Christian duty; and these advantages are not a few. The mental and spiritual preparation which this engagement renders indispensable, the necessity for prayer, the consciousness of being occupied in a mission from God to sinners, the contact and the conflict with Satan reigning in the heart of a fellow-creature, our very disappointments and failures, must assist to mature and strengthen within us our Christian principles, and consequently our spiritual enjoyments. The advantage, however, to ourselves of performing any Christian duty must depend upon our view of its nature and extent,—our conviction, for instance, of how much actually devolves upon us, and where our responsibility ceases.

It seems, indeed, a reasonable and pious resolve to do our best, and leave the result to God. But may not this degenerate rapidly into supineness and contentment with doing very little, or, at any rate, contentment with seeing no fruit?

Now, we cannot draw the line, and the Word of God has not done it for us, where our duties end, and at what point we may abandon them into the hands of God. Indeed, so far from being encouraged to leave results to God, we are commanded to exercise a faith which is declared to be all-powerful, and actually represented as constraining the Almighty. So that in the case of a teacher hoping to be made the instrument of conversion, the conviction may rather be that the purpose is never to be abandoned while prayer and faith may be employed. Applying this to our subject, what a growth and improvement of Christian character may be expected where these exercises are habitually called into action!

When we reflect upon the nature of our spiritual life, so feeble in itself, and dependent, like our physical life, upon the most careful nourishment, yet equally dependent for its growth upon the exercise of its powers, we may justly set a high value upon an engagement which so largely necessitates the employment of these powers. Nor must we entirely gauge the benefits we personally derive by the amount of happiness we find in our work. For there is no stipulation with religious duty,—so much work, so much enjoyment. In truth, when our religious duties are ascertained, there is no choice left to us, whatever may be the consequences.

But there *is* an *absolute* connection between Christian duty truly performed, and spiritual benefit derived, though we may, at the time, be unconscious of it. Many of us may remember, in times past, our attempts at fulfilling religious duty, when, as it were, all our sowing was in tears, when our fears, our anxieties, our doubts so predominated as to leave us little sensible enjoyment. Still the duty was performed. And some of us may now be passing through this state of feeling.

But were not our Christian characters forming? Are they not now forming by this very process? We must take courage. Some of the sweetest and most touching promises of Scripture are addressed to us under these circumstances. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." "In due time," when God's purposes concerning us, and those committed to our care, are accomplished, "we shall reap, if we faint not."

It would be within the scope of this subject, though not suited to to the limits of this paper, to consider Sunday school teaching in its influence on the character of society, upon families, upon the church, and upon the world. But on these subjects I will merely quote the opinion of an experienced and able Sunday school advocate:—"I maintain that the religious influence of Sunday school teaching has been such as to sanctify the character of man, and has done as much directly and indirectly to alleviate human woe and bless our race as any other institution, either ancient or modern."

Penge. M. S.

THE UNSPEAKABLE BLESSING OF GOOD SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTRUCTION.

A good and much valued minister of the Gospel, some few years ago Island Curate of Jamaica, considered it necessary to send his little boy, then a little more than six years of age, over to England for some time on account of his health, being too delicate to bear the trying effects of so hot a climate. The child's aunt, an elderly maiden lady, had long solicited her brother, the Rev. S. P———, to confide his little son Robert to her care; but this request he had hitherto constantly refused, fearing that his sister, who was of an extremely soft and gentle disposition, might fail in that firmness so necessary for the discipline of a child of Robert's temper, which was excessively obstinate and passionate. However, a complication of circumstances which occurred at one and the same moment, induced Robert's father to come rather suddenly to the determination of

accepting his sister's obliging offer, and the little West Indian was intrusted to the charge of a good old servant returning to England, who promised to take every possible care of him on the voyage, and place him with her own hands under his kind aunt's protection.

As soon as our little hero felt himself quite at home in his new abode, and that was a very few hours after he had arrived, he began to give evident signs of his turbulent and overbearing spirit, and ere many days had elapsed his father's fears were but too surely realized, for little Robert P———, was quite the master, and everything and everybody in his aunt's house were completely subservient to his will. However, notwithstanding this bad state of things, the child's health improved rapidly under the wholesome influence of a genial climate, and his aunt's letters to her brother were full of good accounts of the amelioration in her little nephew's physical powers, whereas the mental part was never spoken of, or merely touched upon with the expression of a hope that ere long she would have good news to send home on that score also.

This reserve on his sister's part renewed all the father's apprehensions, and in order in some degree to relieve his uneasiness on the subject, he wrote a long and anxious letter to an old friend, a brother clergyman, who resided at a short distance from Robert's aunt, entreating of him to see his little boy frequently, and watch over his egregious faults of mind and temper, and even to make use of the paternal authority with which he invested him, to remove the child, if necessary, from under his aunt's care, and place him where his violent disposition would be brought under proper control.

The first time the Rev. Mr. Y——— came to see his friend's little boy, he found him perched on the roof of the hen-roost in the poultry yard, from whence the young gentleman was busily engaged removing the tiles at one end, which had been damaged by the recent fall of a chimney. Miss Rachel, his aunt, had already used every possible argument to induce her nephew to relinquish his dangerous occupation, and come down, but to no purpose, and he had just threatened that if she continued her annoying interference much longer he would throw himself headlong down from his elevated post and be killed on the pavement at her feet. On hearing this terrifying announcement, the poor old lady had raised her hands and eyes in utter dismay; after which silent protestation she thought it wiser to retreat from the scene of action and retire into the house, hoping that the obstreperous youth would soon get tired of his laborious work and capitulate.

It was at this conjuncture that Mr. Y——— made his appearance, and was welcomed with joy and gratitude by Miss Rachel P———, who looked upon him as a deliverer sent to relieve her from the

tyranny of the self-willed and naughty little boy. When Miss P—— had related to the good clergyman the cause of her uneasiness, which she did immediately after having offered him a seat, he rose to go in search of the little delinquent, and oblige him to obey his aunt, and come down without further delay. This he found to be an easier task than the good old lady expected, for Mr. Y——— had only to order Robert in the most peremptory manner to descend, when the little fellow almost instantly obeyed the summons.

When the Rev. Mr. Y——— had re-entered Miss P———'s little parlour, and had resumed his seat, he informed Robert's aunt of her brother's intentions regarding his little boy, adding that it was his own private opinion that no time should be lost in placing the child under the care of one whose authority he would not dare to question. Miss P——— readily admitted that Robert required a severer hand than hers, but at the same time she begged of her brother's friend to consider that the child's health was still very delicate, and gave it as her opinion that he would never be able to bear the hardships inseparable from a boarding-school life. After many considerations had been weighed, and different plans suggested by one or other of little Robert's kind friends, it was at length agreed that he should be sent to a day-school in the neighbourhood, kept by a worthy and conscientious elderly lady, who possessed the rare talent of making herself both loved and feared by her little pupils. "I very much wish also," added Mr. Y———, on rising to take leave, "that my little friend Robert should regularly attend the Church Sunday school close by, which is particularly well superintended, for I have known the most beneficial effects arise from the instruction young people receive in a good Sunday School class."

Poor Miss Rachel experienced great difficulty in putting here and Mr. Y——'s concerted plans respecting her little nephew into execution; the self-willed boy positively refused at first to comply with his friends' desires, and it was not until she had seriously threatened to take him to Dr. H———'s academy for young gentlemen, and leave him there forthwith, that the unruly little fellow thought fit to give up his own way and obey his too indulgent relative.

We shall pass over our young hero's stormy *début* at Mrs. Hall's day-school, and the severe trials of patience his good aunt had to endure on this momentous occasion, as on many others which followed in consequence, and enter with him the most interesting place connected with our little narrative, viz., the good and useful Sunday school close by Miss P——'s house. And here again poor Miss Rachel's young tyrant would fain have given the most unequivocal proofs of his violent and domineering spirit, but after a few

ineffectual attempts that way, and a short struggle to get the upper hand with his more quiet and peaceable little companions, the naughty child was forced to submit and give up all thoughts of contention under the firm and steady hand of discipline which was exercised with an undeviating sense of duty by his good and affectionate teacher. A circumstance which occurred not very long after Robert P—— had been admitted as pupil of Mr. Adams' Sunday school class made a great and serious impression on his young mind, as indeed on all those of his fellow scholars. A young boy of about fourteen years of age, one of Dr. H———'s pupils, in place of going straight home one Sunday morning, as he had been desired, and as every one fully expected he would, joined a party of young men, who were going to skate on a pond at a short distance, and before night was brought home a corpse to his broken-hearted widow mother. This same lad, George Sutton, had met Robert with one of his companions in the morning, going to the Sunday school, and had tried to persuade them to accompany him. Our little friend Robert had a great wish to comply, and it is probable that, but for his Sunday school companion, he would have yielded to the temptation. But, oh! how grateful he felt, when the melancholy fate of young George Sutton was made known the following morning, that his little friend and neighbour had prevailed on him to turn his back on the road leading into temptation, and to continue with him the one leading into the safe shelter of the blessed Sunday school.

And now, let us say a few words about little Robert's Sunday school teacher. Henry Adams was a young man of high birth, who devoted his time, and the principal part of his large fortune, to the sole object of making himself useful to his benighted fellow-creatures; and whencesoever the call to exertion could reach Henry's willing ear, it struck on a sympathetic chord in the hearer's breast. It was to his indefatigable zeal that the once small and ill-attended Sunday school, to which we have introduced the reader, branched forth into a numerous and well-directed assembly of young children, many of whom carried home to their unconscious or indifferent families the holy Word of truth, and were thus the means of bringing down the Divine blessing on many who had hitherto been living in ignorance and sin, as without God in the world. As might have been expected, the awful death of George Sutton, and the circumstances attending it, were, by this zealous teacher, commented on in such terms as made a deep and lasting impression on the minds of all present; and, on the Sunday morning, just one week after the dreadful event, many a young heart in that youthful assembly made the most solemn promises, in their inward souls, of abandoning their

former evil ways, and of consecrating their lives to come, and every future desire, to the advancement of the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Amongst those who most steadily kept to this their purpose was our little friend Robert P——, who, from that day, became another and a better boy, and who, through the grace of God, shone forth, as he advanced in life, as a light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, seeking thus to imitate the good example set before him by Henry Adams, his valuable and much beloved Sunday school teacher.

Paris. S. [illegible].

THE CHILD'S MESSAGE.

"Call them in," the poor, the wretched, sin-stained wand'rers from the fold;
Peace and pardon freely offer; can you weigh their worth with gold?
"Call them in," the weak, the weary, laden with the doom of sin:
Bid them come and rest with Jesus, He is waiting, "Call them in."

"Call them in," the Jew, the Gentile, bid the stranger to the feast:
"Call them in," the rich and noble, from the highest to the least—
Forth the Father runs to meet them, He hath all their sorrows seen:
Robe and royal sandal wait the lost ones, "Call them in."

"Call them in," the broken-hearted, low'ring 'neath the brand of shame;
Speak love's message, low and tender, "T'was for sinners Jesus came."
See! the shadows lengthen round us, soon the day-dawn will begin;
Can you leave them lost and lonely? Christ is coming! "Call them in."

"Call them in," the little children, tarrying far away—away;
Wait, oh wait not for to-morrow, Christ would have them come to-day—
Follow on! the Lamb is leading! He has conquered—we shall win;
Bring the halt and blind to Jesus, He will heal them, "Call them in."

"Call them in," and swell the chorus of the angels' song above;
Hark! they sing a Saviour's glory, and a Father's changeless love;
O'er salvation's sealed ones watching, though a veil doth float between;
Holy Spirit, by Thy power, call—oh! call the wand'rers in.

"Call them in," the Master waiteth, save them from the snares of hell;
Rest ye 'neath the blood-stained lintel? of the grace that seeks them tell—
Hark! upon the crowded highway, and amid the city's din—
Sounds a child's voice, sweet and solemn; "Oh be sure and call them in!"

[illegible].

The Teacher in his Study.

ON THE PREPARATION OF A LESSON.

"An unprepared teacher will generally be an unsuccessful teacher." These words, familiar to all who use the class books of the Sunday School Institute, may seem somewhat severe; but they will be found justified by experience. They who hold that conviction by no means imply that the rule has no exceptions. Success is God's gift, and when the teacher's unpreparedness arises from no fault of his own, none will deny that an impromptu effort at a lesson, in unfeigned humble reliance on God's help may be successful in the highest degree.

But it is just that reliance which is the cause (humanly speaking) of the success, whilst self-confidence, whether the lesson be prepared or not, will as certainly spoil the work.

The question, therefore, to be first settled, is not the relative value of study on the one hand, and reliance on God's aid on the other, (for on this there can be no dispute) but whether that study for which we are arguing, be not an important aid to the teacher who, when he has done his best, still looks for a good result only to Him "without whom nothing is strong and nothing holy."

And this surely needs little consideration. The mind that is most sensible of its own weakness and ignorance, will be the most resolute in availing itself of all the means within its reach for self-improvement. The heart that most deeply feels its inferiority to the perfect standard set forth in the gospels, will most earnestly seek to grow into the image of the Lord Jesus, not only in inward holiness, but also in outward usefulness. And the more we know of the power of those words "ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price," the more shall we own and act upon the following precept to glorify God with all our faculties of mind and body.

Let us then turn our thoughts to the questions, first, What is gained by previous study of the lesson? and then, How should that study be conducted?

On the first head I would remark that when that study is neglected, although the reason we should assign for the neglect would almost certainly be want of time, yet the conscience would secretly pacify itself by the excuse that after all there was no great need of the study, because we should certainly find that the lesson was already familiar to us, and that we knew more about it than our class did, being therefore able to teach them something beyond their previous knowledge. In such cases there is also a strong temptation to snatch

up a story book, or to avail ourselves of the dangerous aid of notes and full lessons prepared for actual use, rather than of those that require study.

I need scarcely say that all this is wrong, and very injurious to usefulness. Some of us may have little time for preparation—no one can honestly say he has none at all. God is no hard master, expecting ten talents where He has given but one, but that one must be used, not buried.

In truth, however familiar the lesson may seem to us, yet if we read it carefully, afresh, with prayer for more light and knowledge, we shall gain these two great benefits—INCREASED KNOWLEDGE, and DEEPENED IMPRESSIONS. As to the first, I think the experience of those who had the most carefully and longest studied the word of God, would most strongly prove that it contains a depth of divine truth which no one yet has ever fully fathomed, and that it resembles the beauty of some fertile land, which spreads out wider and wider around us as we climb a lofty mountain, the horizon being limited only by the narrow range of the eye not by any actual boundary of the country.

And independently of this, the second point ought to be pressed strongly. We need to have our impressions renewed and deepened. The various occupations of daily life, innocent and even necessary, are yet like the dust and cobwebs that gather alike in the palace and church, as well as in the cottage—and that gradually disfigure and conceal the noblest as well as the lowliest works of art. These must be brushed away, and the beauty beneath them brought out afresh. And it is in the quiet half-hour of the teacher's study that old impressions come back, and new ones also make themselves felt, so that we may then go back to our work not as to some thrice-told tale, but almost as if with a new message on some fresh discovered truth. This is the life-blood of teaching; and to attain it should be the object of our constant prayer and study.

Another great advantage of the preparation will be the making our teaching more clear and defined. The teacher ought to have an object in view, all through the lesson, otherwise he will fall into discursiveness, and repetition. When we have not made up our mind what we ought to talk about, we insensibly follow one turn of thought after another, having but little bearing on the lesson; or we unconsciously take up again and again some favorite topic which our little hearers have long since become familiar with. Such teaching is pointless and powerless; and considering how little time and how few opportunities we have for our work, we surely cannot afford to lose one of the precious hours we may call our own. The seed-time is very short—how needful then that the seed should be of the best, and should be most carefully scattered.

From this reflection we pass naturally to one arising from it, namely, that the truths thus clearly and distinctly brought forward will (humanly speaking) be the more effective. Every part of Scripture has some personal bearing on human life, and one great advantage of our preparation will be the discovery and application of that especial lesson.

I will not dwell on a point that probably has occurred to you all, —the benefits we shall ourselves receive from this systematic and careful study of the Bible. I believe it is scarcely possible to overrate the value of this reward to a pains-taking teacher, but on the present occasion our minds are rather to be directed to the other side of the whole question.

And now then, let us turn to the second head—How shall we best prepare our lessons? and much that has been already said will prove applicable here. Our lessons should be prepared regularly and systematically, with a mind open to receive fresh ideas, and a heart desiring to have its impressions revived and strengthened: they should be prepared on something like a definite plan, with a distinct purpose, and above all, with the view of finding the best practical application for the children.

I need scarcely say that prayer is the first and chief element of such study. He alone who inspired the writers of Scripture can enlighten the mind to receive and understand it. They who pray most, learn most, if they act up to their prayers.

And then, I would suggest, let us first seek the application of the passage, for this is the gem, of which all else is the setting: and unless we get this firmly fixed on the mind, we run the risk of having our own attention and that of the class absorbed in something that is merely an accessory. And to select this lesson will often require thought, for so rich is scripture that one may easily be bewildered by its varied treasures. Take for instance the parable of the Prodigal Son. What a cluster of truths we find here! But we need not hesitate which to fix on as the leading one, for we find, by studying the context (another needful step in preparation) that the parable was expressly designed to set forth and extol God's free forgiving love. And such a lesson is one most thoroughly suitable to our young hearers, which again is a point to which I would draw your attention, as we may sometimes have to choose between the lesson that appeals most strongly to ourselves and that which is most applicable to the class, when a wise teacher will prefer the latter.

With this main lesson held firmly in memory; let us then write out the secondary lessons which need more or less of attention in the course of the instruction, only bearing in mind not to let these usurp the first place when we come to use our materials.

Next I would suggest notes on the circumstances recorded in the lesson; brief heads of the incidents, the time, the place, the persons. And here a warning is not altogether needless; for some teachers become so interested in these accessories as to spend all their time over the geography, or history of the lesson, leaving the practical lessons untouched.

And lastly, with the same caution, let us look for illustrations, those living embodiments of abstract truths, those "pictures" or, "figures of the true," which when simple, wisely chosen, and applicable, do so much to breathe life into what else would be mere form and matter. And happily, where can we find better models and examples of these illustrations than in the Gospels? He who spake as never man spake, breathed a language unheard before, into countless natural objects; and listening, as He has taught us, we do indeed find "sermons in stones," we do indeed hear His loving voice in the song of the bird, the ripple of the stream, the gentle dew-fall, the pealing thunder, the restless sea, and all inanimate nature has learnt a tongue from Him—the sun, the clouds, the flowers, seem to speak as He has bidden them. Happy they who listen to these voices, and can catch the sounds for other ears as well as their own!

To conclude—Shall we trust to our own study, or shall we use notes prepared by others? I have already blamed the indolent use of such matter as merely needs the memory. Our Institute is engaged in publishing notes to aid the teacher, but the aim all along in these has been only to aid those who work for themselves. Such notes, used in such a manner, and combined with careful thought of our own, will, I believe, be found truly valuable. Let us work for ourselves, but surely we shall do well, to avail ourselves also of the thoughts of those who have gone over the same ground, and for the self-same end. **I. G. F.**

PERFECTION NO TRIFLE!

A FRIEND called on Michael Angelo, who was finishing a statue. Some time afterwards he called again; the sculptor was still at his work. His friend looking at the figure exclaimed, "You have been idle since I saw you last." "By no means," replied the sculptor; "I have retouched this part, and polished that; I have softened this feature, and brought out this muscle; I have given more expression to this lip, and more energy to that limb." "Well, well," said his friend; "but all these are trifles." "It may be so," replied Angelo, "but recollect that *Trifles* make *Perfection*, and *Perfection* is no *Trifle*." *Anon.*

SCRIPTURE PHILOLOGY.

No. VIII.—Our Lord's Idioms (*Continued*).

John xi. 25, 26. "*I am the resurrection and the life*: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and he that liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die."

Every one feels how intensely forcible and striking these words of our Lord are. Whence is it? Have we here one of those strong figures of speech so characteristic of Hebrew composition; or is it only ordinary emphasis? Had He "who spake as never man spake" merely said, "I am able to raise the dead, and give new life to deceased men," we should have understood Him to teach Martha the great truth that "in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" but the form of speech employed seems to indicate even more than this, and to point to himself personally, as that only pure, holy, submissive *man*—that second Adam—that "repairer of the breach"—that new head of the human family, who being about "to destroy death, and Him who had the power of it," by one last act of obedience, would *so* recover for us our lost crown of immortality, and entitle himself to bestow it on "all them that obey Him." And *so* "the corn of wheat fell into the ground and died;" and in a little time became "the first-fruits of them that slept!" In this latter way we have been accustomed to take the words; conscious at the same time how full of mystery and of power are "these sayings of Christ." Here, it is as if Christ had adopted these two words, "the Life," and "the Resurrection," as new titles of His own eternal Pre-eminence.

The truth above all others which is the special doctrine of Christianity, is not the unity of God—nor even the atonement for sin—nor yet the existence of a future state, but the

Resurrection of the Dead;

the return to life again of the human race; a life never to be extinguished, and first exemplified in the person of Christ. This was the chief topic of Apostolic preaching, and should continue so to this day, even though it be not "everywhere spoken against." Ridiculed it may be; but it is true. We remember it was this that called forth the mockery of the Athenian sceptics in St. Paul's time, and they did not stand alone among the learned heathen *Professors* of philosophy, for Pliny, and some others of note, deride it as "a thing incredible."

THE JEWISH ARGUMENT. The ancient *Jews* however, have written very fully on the subject of the resurrection, and firmly believed it. They enter into all the minutiæ, and reply, after their manner, to all the objections, however subtle. They point out the *necessity* of the resurrection of the body, by referring to ultimate reasons, and final causes.

We shall here give a chief example of the precision and keen edge of their thoughts. They felt the difficulty of the *identity* of the future body with that "sown in corruption," and meet it by an argument of their own, after their own hearts; it is not, however, very dissimilar to some hypotheses of the northern mind in modern times; and this is still the point that stumbles "many wise men after the flesh," who will only admit as much as the old heathen acknowledged, namely, the immortality of the soul.

This difficulty lies in the apparent impossibility of restoring *the same* body, there being no strict analogy in all nature. When a thing is in accordance with the laws of nature, faith is easy enough: but when a truth has no analogy, we are obliged to remonstrate with believers in *mere* natural religion, and to ask still, "why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?"

And here we are reminded to call the attention of our readers, as we have done before, to the necessity of reviving the regard of the LORD'S DAY AS THE STANDING MEMORIAL OF THE RESURRECTION OF HIS HUMAN BODY, in which fact the force of the appropriate rite of the day, namely, the Lord's Supper, also chiefly lies. We highly commend the zeal of good men for the honour of God in regard to the Sabbath; but we have to remember, always, that we are *Christians*.

The Jews, in their famous book Zohar, assert that although human bodies, shortly after death, "return earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," yet still that there remains, of every body in particular, a small atomic rudimental part which escapes the general decay. According to them it is a very small bone, called the bone "luz." This bone, they say, is preserved unchanged amidst all the mutations to which matter, and especially organic matter, is subject by a common law of nature.

In relation to this idea of an imperishable bone in the human body, it is instructive, and withal pleasant, to see how they handle the Scriptures. One standing text, in favour of the resurrection with them, is, Isa. xxvi. 19, "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise; awake and sing, *ye that dwell in the dust*, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; and the earth shall cast forth her dead."

Now, they treat this "dew" just as we do, namely, as an emblematic promise of the influence of the Holy Spirit; so *we* pray, "that it may please Thee to pour upon the ministry the continual *dew* of thy blessing;" but then they consider it will be an extraordinary influence for the special occasion of raising the dead. They say the dew will be luminous, as well as vivifying, and be to the atomic rudiment of every deceased servant of God what the natural dew is to the withered herbage of summer. They are not without the expectation that the natural descendants of Abraham will have a precedence in this blessing; but they allow that all pious Gentiles will have a share in it also.

The fancy of such a bone originates in a notion common to most original thinkers on the subject of the resurrection,—the notion, that in order to the *identity* of the body, there must, at any rate, be some germ, some rudiment of the old body still preserved in existence, which by receiving increase from new matter, shall at length constitute and represent the original frame of the deceased.

For ourselves we certainly cannot see the necessity of this *material* rudiment; there is, and must be, a rudiment indeed, always in existence and indestructible, which constitutes the identity of the man; but that rudiment, we take it, is his *soul*—his immortal spirit. Surely, at least so it seems to us, we are conscious that we are ourselves, because we have the same soul we always had; as to the mere flesh and bones, these we know are not the same even from one year's end to another.

We have said that there is not in nature anything strictly in analogy with the resurrection; if there is anything, it is the seed of plants, "it may be a corn of wheat, or of some other grain:" but the analogy of the grain sown stands not in its correspondence to the mortal body, but to the human parent; and that of the ears of corn springing from it, to his natural offspring, in whom the parent never dies, but continues, as it were, to be reproduced and multiplied, from generation to generation. St. Paul's point, on referring to this emblem of restoration in 1 Cor. xv. 36, is not to prove anything, but to remind the "fool" that "God is able according to His *mighty working* even to subdue all things unto Himself;" and he repeats the same argument in Col. ii. 12, and elsewhere, also, where he speaks of the operation of God's "mighty power," in reference to the resurrection of the body of Christ.

THE PATRISTIC ARGUMENT varies with the various writers among the fathers who have treated on this subject.

Among them there is a fragment by Justin Martyr; his reasonings, however, do not appear to us quite strong enough to turn the sneers of modern gainsayers into "confusion of face," although they are interesting to Christians.

Athenagoras writes more to the purpose, in a more complete treatise. He very wisely observes, "He that could make the world out of nothing, may well be thought able to make up man again, now that there is, at least, *something* to make him of."

Another, and not a contemptible suggestion, is, that where it is said in Genesis, that God made man originally, not as He made the world, out of nothing, but "out of the dust of the ground," the operation of second causes may possibly be implied.

THE SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENT. We shall not introduce here the proofs of the resurrection, with which we suppose all the teachers for whom we are principally writing, are well acquainted, from the fountain head. We will generally observe, however, that the chief *type* of the resurrection we take to be the predicament of Jonah: also, that we regard the restoration of Isaac to his grand, old father's bosom to be intended much more to typify the resurrection than the offering him up, the vicarious death of the Lord Jesus; see Heb. xi. 19. Among the *predictions*, we have Isaiah xxvi. 19; Ps. xvi. 10. The *testimonies and witnesses* are enumerated by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 5—8. The *results* are the Pentecostal gift, Acts ii. 33: and the *wide* enjoyment of the teaching, comforting, purifying, and strengthening presence of the Holy Spirit. O, would to God that Christian faith, and love, and Scriptural purity of doctrine, conspired to render that presence universal! The *memorials* are the Lord's Day, with the Lord's Supper,—Easter Day being reckoned as an annual and special momento. And the *glories* of the great fact, recorded in every page of the Apostolic Epistles, may be summed up in one statement;—"we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is;" or, if we desire another, we may recall Rev. iii. 21;—"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am *set down with my Father* on His throne."

Tenby. C. N. S.

THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF LAWS.

It is a remarkable fact, and one which we think of some importance in these days of doubt and uncertainty, that of those with whom we have had a sufficiently intimate acquaintance to justify a decided opinion as to their characters and spiritual condition, a very large proportion of sincere, earnest, and steady believers in the truth of Christianity, has belonged to a class which would seem at first sight predisposed to scepticism, being composed of men who by the necessities of their position are habituated to take nothing upon trust, but to require the best possible proof of every fact, however trifling. Probably the reason why so many lawyers are sound in the faith, is to be found in this very habit of cautious enquiry; for those who are most thoroughly acquainted with the infirmity of human testimony must be the best able to appreciate the superiority of Christian evidences, and to feel the full force of the argument, "If we receive the witness of man, the witness of God is greater;" and having continually in their daily business to encounter plausible objections to what they know to be facts, they are not "soon shaken in mind" by the recurrence of specious cavils at Divine truth. They have learned to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."

We have now before us "The Influence of the Mosaic Code upon Subsequent Legislation, by J. Benj. Marsden, Solicitor,"*—a work, which although it does not profess to be directed immediately to the prominent questions of the day, has in truth much to do with them, and coming from one whose profession is closely connected with the subject on which he writes, is entitled to be regarded with respect as well as interest. The author thus introduces his labours:—

"The following pages can claim but slender pretensions to original research still less to theological learning: opportunity was wanting for the one; the author's pursuits precluded the other. Materials for the work were chiefly furnished by the investigation of other writers, who in pursuit of different objects, had already travelled over some portions of the same ground. Since, however, the authority of the Old Testament has been called in question, even by those whose profession bound them to defend it, to trace its influence upon the principles of jurisprudence as a moral science, presented itself as a subject of interest. It was one, at least, that not unnaturally would claim the attention of a person engaged in the practice of the law. Upon this inquiry, therefore, the author employed such leisure as he could spare from his professional pursuits. As it progressed, each step in the investigation confirmed the conclusions that are now submitted to the reader. Indeed, had the compass of the volume permitted, many resemblances in the laws of the Hindus and the Chinese might have been added in illustration

* The Influence of the Mosaic Code upon Subsequent Legislation. By J. B. Marsden, Solicitor. 8vo. pp. 308. London:—Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

of their origin from the Hebrew sources. The laws of the Mohammedans have not been mentioned, because their source from the Mosaic Code has long since been placed beyond question. But should the demand for this work ever justify the publication of another edition, the author hopes hereafter to enlarge it by the addition of some coincidences to be found in the Chinese and Hindu institutions."

Then we have a list of more than forty books to which Mr. Marsden refers as his chief authorities; and the course he has adopted of collecting together the scattered results of former research, not only renders available a greater body of facts than could have been amassed by an individual, but the conclusions are in many cases strengthened by the consideration that they have been arrived at by other minds unbiassed by the desire of supporting the author's theory. After a chapter on the law of nature, in which are adduced many proofs that the ancients were generally agreed in ascribing a Divine origin to legislation, Mr. Marsden passes on to consider the sources of ancient jurisprudence, and contends that the Mosaic law was the original from which a great portion of the legislation of other nations was derived; bringing forward a great number of curious instances, as to which this inference seems inevitable. After tracing the progress of laws from the Hebrews through the Greeks to the Romans, and the influence of Roman laws on those of modern nations, the author proceeds to a more particular examination of some classes of laws, as laws of retribution, of restitution, and others, in which he goes at some length into the enactments of different legislators; and devotes a chapter to the constitution of the supreme courts of the Greeks and Egyptians, to show their resemblance to the Hebrew model, ending with a chapter of conclusions, from which we give some extracts, to illustrate the author's style and treatment of his subject:—

"We have examined the methods of legislation adopted by the Greek and Roman philosophers. We have seen their repeated admissions that laws must be founded upon right and justice. We have their authority for the conclusion that right and justice are not to be determined by the arbitrary rules of convenience. Therefore, at the outset of this work, we thought it the best opportunity to refer to those principles to which the philosophers of antiquity ascribed the authority of their legislation. * * * How much they felt the necessity of some standard by which they could distinguish what was good from what was evil, what was just from what was unjust, is manifest from their own statements. They acknowledged the impossibility of determining these points without having some perfect standard of what is right and just in itself. This standard they described as the law of nature. The law of nature they described as the law of creation, and ascribed its origin to the Divine Author of all things. The writings of some philosophers set forth this principle as the will of the sovereign Jupiter. Some treat the law of nature as emanating from the Divine mind. Some deify the principle itself, treating nature as a Divine principle, from which all human things had their origin, and by which they must be regulated. But all

agree in attributing to this principle an authority higher than that of a conventional obligation. We thence have the testimony of legislators, arguing upon laws, not from any preconceived principles, but from the nature of the subject with which they had to deal, that in order to establish any rule of conduct for the governance of mankind worthy the name of a law, such regulations must be founded, not upon the dictates of convenience, but upon some supreme principles of right and wrong. * * * *

"There is, probably, no greater obstacle to the reform and consolidation of laws in this country than the abnegation of such a principle. Yet nowhere is it set forth in such comprehensive terms as in the Mosaic laws, to which our legal institutions owe their origin. * * * What is it that has distinguished our greatest lawyers, but the power and the courage to reconcile our laws to some general principles of right and justice? What is it that has rendered famous the decisions of our most celebrated judges, but the clearness with which the principles of justice have been eliminated from a mass of judicial decisions, in which such elements are only casually to be met with, because the most simple and perfect standard of right and wrong had ceased to be recognised?"

We have seen that this book does not profess to exhaust the subject of which it treats, nor does it come within the author's plan to examine the internal evidences of Divine origin in the Mosaic law; he has merely undertaken to show that its excellence has been universally acknowledged by mankind, and its sacred character generally admitted; that it has been the fountain head of legislation to the civilised world, and that no laws can properly be founded on other principles than those from which it evidently springs. This is well and fairly done in these pages, which exhibit in a small compass a large mass of useful information, and the work may be recommended to the attentive perusal of all persons interested in the work of amending our laws, as well as many more to whom it will be welcome as tending strongly to a conclusion in favour of the inspiration of Scripture. Viewed in this light, it is a collection of evidences in support of a truth beautifully suggested in that compendium of Christian doctrine, Hunt's symbolical picture of "the Light of the World," where the waning influence of heathen philosophy is represented by faint moonlight, which, dim and deceptive as it is, must necessarily have derived its origin from the rays of the Sun of Righteousness: that truth which is so clearly laid down by St. John, that the Divine Word "was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." But as "He was in the world and the world knew Him not," it has ever been the tendency of fallen human nature, instigated no doubt by the father of lies, to put some idol in the place of God; an image "graven by art and man's device," or philosophy, or reason:—a symbol, a system, or a doctrine. Whatever it be, it partakes of this nature if it hide from the soul Him to whom it ought to bear witness.

It has been a favourite device of infidels to represent Christianity

as a human edifice built up with the fragments of heathen creeds and forms of worship; but their efforts in this direction have accumulated a mass of resemblances and analogies which lead irresistibly to the opposite conclusion; that all the truth, and beauty, and likeness to Christian faith and morality which may be found here and there in the debased systems of heathenism, are but the relics and distorted symbols of the Divine revelation given to the antediluvian patriarchs, or at the latest, to Noah and his immediate descendants; which, probably, was much more full and explicit than the short account in Genesis would lead us to imagine. Traces, scattered throughout the world, seem to indicate that such leading doctrines as the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement, resurrection, and a future state, were revealed to man at a very early period, though, perhaps, to some extent in a symbolical manner; and a book which should collect all these records of faith, and stripping them of the deceptive gloss of false chronology, show their derivation from the primæval religion, would be a glorious bulwark of Christianity, if written by one whose learning and leisure could do justice to so vast a subject. In the meantime, the work which we have noticed, is valuable as tending to prove that all true and just law is of Divine origin; and may be taken as an instalment of what might be done in illustrating and enforcing the grand truth, that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Light, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

Σκαφιον.

ANECDOTE.

The superintendent of a Sunday school was questioning his pupils concerning the addresses made to them during the previous session.

"Children, what did Mr. P—— tell you this morning?"

No answer was made.

"Can't any one tell me what he said? Susie, can't you remember?"

Susie, a bright little girl, of seven years, arose, and, with one finger in her mouth, bashfully lisped out,—

"Pleathe, thir, he talked and he talked, and he thed ath how he loved uth, and he talked—and—and—we all thought he wath a-goin' to thay thumthing, but he didn't thay nothing."

Those who undertake to address Sabbath-school children, without having anything to say, may learn something from Susie.

From an American Paper.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS.

"The Angel of the Covenant."—Enlightened Jewish Rabbis.

An idea prevails with our commentators, and others, that the Angel of the Covenant, so frequently mentioned in the Pentateuch, could be no other than the Lord Jesus himself: and the opinion is grounded on his receiving Divine honours. Yet there is no countenance given to this idea in the New Testament; on the contrary, Stephen and others expressly call him "the Angel." What do the old Jews think about it? It is in vain to inquire there, many would reply, for their Talmud is full of childish fancies. Granted, as to the fancies of *some* of the Rabbis, but all were not of this school; and the opinions of such Jews as Maimonides, familiarly called Rambam-Onkelos, and others, relative to facts in their own Scriptures, are not only worth attending to, but supply, at times, the very best answers to the far more mischievous fancies of such men as Dr. Colenso.

This is one among these opinions of theirs. God exists in Three Persons: there is, first Jehovah Elohim, that is to say, God; then there is Jehovah the *Word*, who made the world; then there is Jehovah the Shechinah, that is to say, the person who occupied the mercy-seat in the Holy of Holies. Now, it seems clear this last Jehovah is the same person as the Angel of the Covenant; and if so, then was He not the Holy Spirit, instead of the Word?

To pursue the inquiry a little, we know that the word Shechinah means habitation, and that the reverend old Jews meant to express by it the inhabitant Himself. We get no light here, then. But now let us turn to Onkelos a moment. He is denouncing the *gross* manner in which some of the Talmudists explain things, and the *childishly literal* way in which they take the sublime figurative language of the early inspired writers. And Rambam himself thus quotes him:—"He had the most complete skill in the Hebrew and Chaldee languages. In his paraphrase, he was very exact in relation to those texts which attribute motion or passion to God, or describe Him with hands, or other members of a man, not to give a *verbal rendering*, but *the true and genuine sense and meaning*. Thus, meeting with a word which ascribed motion to God, instead of saying God *came* to such and such a place, he uses the term appearance, or manifestation, of the same visible glory of the Shechinah in that place. Thus he interprets *the Lord descended to such and such a place*, the Lord revealed Himself there; or, again, in Gen.

xviii. 21, where it says, '*I will go down now, and see*,' I will reveal myself, and know."

Now, this appears to us to be very striking and beautiful in the mouth of an old Rabbi, and presents a very different aspect of the Jewish mind of old to that which we are accustomed to ridicule as childish and fanciful. Taking, then, this same intelligence with us, why may we not understand that when the Angel of the Covenant appeared, either to Abraham, or Moses, or others, it was none other than some embodied manifestation of God, possibly by the Holy Spirit, who, of old, wrought in so many wonderful ways? If so, the person taking upon Himself the honour due to God was no more than what happened when, because He dwelt miraculously in the Apostles, Peter said to Ananias, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."

RAMBAM'S COMPARISON OF HIS OWN VIEWS WITH THOSE OF SOME OF THE RABBINS, A HINT, PERHAPS, TO SOME AMONG OURSELVES.

"It is to be observed that they who have embraced the Jewish faith and law differ in their opinions concerning the happiness which will attend obedience. Their notions are as different as their capacities, which seem very much puzzled. Thus some have thought that the garden of Eden was the promised happiness, and that to be a place where they would eat and drink without any bodily trouble or labour, where there were houses of precious stones, and abundance of extravagancies of this sort.

"Others did think that happiness to be hoped for was the coming of Messiah; that in those days men would all be kings, and of a great stature, and should possess the whole earth for ever, and abundance of other things, which it is impossible should be understood in a literal sense.

"A third sort did believe a *carnal* resurrection of the dead would be the reward of their obedience; that a man should be restored to life after death, to return home with his friends and relations, and eat and drink as before.

"A fourth sort did believe a temporal felicity; the blessing of children, fruitful harvests, victory over enemies, and health of body to be the proposed happiness.

"But a fifth party have joined the two opinions of the resurrection of the dead and the coming of Messiah; believe Messiah will come, the dead rise, and go into paradise, and there live in all imaginable enjoyment for ever."

Rambam then gives his own opinion thus:—"But the days of Messiah are not to be hoped for, that our corn and riches might be

increased. The prophets and good men desired Messiah's coming so earnestly that they might enjoy the society and conversation of good men; that they might acquire knowledge, and see the justice of their King, and in how near a rank to the Creator He is placed, as it is said of Him, "*Thou art my Son*;" and that the law of Moses might be perfectly obeyed without any *constraint* or disturbance."

How near the truth were some of these men! The last paragraph is but a sample of much this very learned man says of true obedience, that is to say, of the obedience of faith.

If we can be assured such food as this will be acceptable to the readers of the "Sunday School Quarterly," we shall send even a brighter extract, from the translation by Pococke, another day.

E. S.

ON THE STUDY OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

PART I.

THE object of the present paper is to incite to Bible study. And never was a reverent and patient examination of the Scriptures more needed than in these days, both for the stability of our personal faith, and for the welfare of the Church at large.

When a professedly pious and liberal scepticism essays to combine an admiration of the Bible as a whole, with doubts as to the genuineness and accuracy of almost all its individual component parts, and a faith in and love for the Redeemer, with a denial of all that rendered His redemption necessary, or made it a complete and precious reality,—our one safeguard is an accurate knowledge of the Sacred Volume itself, in all its harmonious diversity, in all its Divine truthfulness.

And if there is one branch of Scripture study more important than the others, it is that of the fourfold record which contains the story of the Saviour's life. Not only have the four Gospels themselves been the especial object of recent attacks, both in Germany and England, but our acceptance or rejection of them as genuine, authentic, and inspired, really involves all the questions of which we hear so much. If we accept them, we cannot deny or explain away miracles, for these are so intertwined with the simple narrative that it is impossible to "eliminate" from it its miraculous element. We cannot doubt the predictive and supernatural character of Old Testament prophecy, when we find so many express decla-

rations in the Gospels that certain events came to pass "that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." We cannot deny the inspiration of the Psalms when our Lord Himself uses the words, "David spake by the Holy Ghost;" nor the authenticity of the Pentateuch in the face of His repeated reference to its statements as historical facts.* We cannot "spiritualize" the resurrection, the ascension, or the twofold future state, if we believe the straightforward narratives of the Evangelists and the solemn warnings of Christ. And when we study with care the account of the Saviour's agony, we are "shut up unto the faith" of His propitiatory atonement.

Bishop Ellicott says truly, in his deeply interesting *Hulsean Lectures on the Life of Christ*,† that it is to the great questions connected with the life of our Redeemer that all the controversies of these latter days are tending and converging; and that the inspiration of Scripture, the efficacy of the atonement, with many other questions of immeasurable importance, must yet be postponed to the inquiry,—*Are the facts of the Gospel true?*

Before entering upon the more immediate topics of this paper, viz., the mutual relations and respective characteristics of the four Gospels, and their subject-matter in the life, character, and teaching of Christ, it will be desirable briefly to run over the heads of the evidence on which our belief in them is based,‡ and particularly of the internal evidence which is derived from that study of their contents which it is my main object to stimulate.

The bold infidelity of the last century rejected the Bible altogether. It did not take the trouble to invent some theory by which to save the sacredness of the Gospels, but asserted that the Evangelists were either themselves deceived, or else conscious deceivers. This idea has been abandoned by the more specious and refined scepticism of our own day, and the "Ideological" theory has taken its place, of which Strauss is the boldest, though perhaps on that account not the most dangerous expositor.

"The object of Ideology," writes the Rev. F. C. Cook, "as it is described in the writings of Strauss, was to reconcile belief in the spiritual truths which he recognised as the ideal basis of Christianity,

* See Matt. iv. 4, 7, 10; v. 21, 27, 31, 38; viii. 4, 11; x. 15; xi. 23; xii. 5; xv. 4; xix. 4, 8, 18; xxii. 31, 37, 39; xxiii. 35; xxiv. 37; Luke x. 12; xiii. 28; xxiv. 27, 44; John iii. 14; v. 45, 46; vi. 32, 48; vii. 19; viii. 17, 37, 39, 40, 56, 58; x. 34, 35. The value and significance of some of these references are clearly stated by Mr. Birks, *Bible and Modern Thought*, chap. x.

† Lecture i. p. 3.

‡ This sketch of the evidences of the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospels mainly follows the interesting *resumé* given by Professor Rawlinson in the *Bampton Lectures* for 1859.

with the rejection of all the miraculous events, and by far the largest portion of the narrative with which those truths are connected."* To effect this, the Gospels are referred to the second or third century after Christ, when it is supposed they may have been compiled, honestly perhaps, to embody the then existing belief of the Church, and so are found to contain that preternatural element which the superstition of the early Christians had mixed up with the real incidents of the life of Jesus.†

The object of this extraordinary theory is clearly to get rid of miracles, and when men have a preconceived opinion to support, they are apt to be blind to the most convincing chain of evidence. Such a chain of evidence we possess for the genuineness‡ of the Gospels. The ninth chapter of Paley's *Evidences* contains an admirable compressed summary of the argument from *external testimony*, the candid reader of which must acknowledge that there is no ancient book extant, not even such oft-quoted works as those of Horace or Cicero, the genuineness of which is so incontestably proved as is that of the New Testament.

I may, however, briefly direct attention to some points of *internal evidence*, which belong more precisely to my subject.

Taking the last Gospel first, the writer states emphatically that he was an eye-witness of the scenes he describes. "He that saw it bare record, and his record is true, and he knoweth that he saith true." "This,"—that is, as we see by the context, John, the son of Zebedee,—"is the disciple which testifieth of these things." (chap. xix. 35; xxi. 24.) Either, then, the writer of the fourth Gospel is St. John, or he is guilty of deliberate falsehood, which the Ideologists do not insinuate.

No one can read the two prefaces with which the third Gospel and the Acts are opened, without acknowledging that they proceeded from the same author, as even Strauss admits. Now a comparison of the Acts with St. Paul's Epistles, such as Paley has instituted in his *Horæ Paulinæ*, renders it equally plain that St. Luke wrote the former; therefore he was the author of the Gospel, which itself is not devoid of evidence of its origin, the diseases which called forth our Lord's healing power being described with an exactness not observable in the other Gospels, and which would naturally come from the "beloved physician." We know that this Gospel belongs

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* *Aids to Faith*, Essay on *Ideology and Subscription*, p. 133.

† The fallacy of the various sceptical theories on this subject is well exposed in Rogers' *Eclipse of Faith*, pp. 168—192.

‡ A work is *genuine*, when really written by the person whose name it bears; *authentic*, when its contents are truthful and accurate.

to the apostolic age, from the writer's assertion (chap. i. 4) that he received his facts from eye-witnesses, though not one himself, which we are bound to credit equally with the statement of St. John. It must, indeed, be ascribed to a very early date, for it is called in the Acts "the former treatise," and it is demonstrable that the Acts was written within thirty-five years after the ascension.* There seems, too, little doubt that this Gospel is twice referred to by St. Paul in his Epistles. In the passage (1 Tim. v. 18), "For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn, and, The labourer is worthy of his reward," the first quotation is from Deuteronomy (chap. xxv. 4); the second is not found in the Old Testament, but verbally coincides with a verse in St. Luke's Gospel (chap. x. 7), which must therefore have been known, and accepted as Scripture, at the date of the Epistle. In 2 Cor. viii. 18, we find the words "We have sent with him *the brother*, whose praise is *in the gospel* in all the Churches." Mr. Birks's argument that Luke and his record are here referred to seems to me incontestable.†

The Gospels of Matthew and Mark must be referred to the same age as that of Luke, if only on the single critical ground of the close resemblance of all three in style of thought and language; but they also contain just that incidental kind of evidence which is so satisfying to a reasonable mind. For instance, while the three latter Evangelists always mention Pilate by name, Matthew several times calls him "the governor," which would imply that he wrote during his term of office, or if not, within the eight years that elapsed between his removal and the appointment of a successor with the same title.‡ Both Matthew and Mark allude to persons and events in a way that implies their being nearly contemporary. Mark, for example, calls James the son of Alpheus "James *the less*," to distinguish him from the brother of John, which he would not naturally do when the latter had been long dead, and the former had become bishop of the mother church of Jerusalem.§ We find in these two Gospels, also, traces of their authorship. The publican Matthew, though he honestly suppresses not the hated character of his pre-apostolic life, leaves others to tell us that he "left all" to follow Christ, and that he boldly invited his late companions in extortion to meet the des-

* See Birks, *Horæ Evangelicæ*, Book ii. chap. 2.

† Ibid, Book ii. chap. 3.

‡ Pilate was removed from his office in A.D. 36, but no successor with the same title was appointed till A.D. 44. The title, "the governor," would thus naturally refer to Pilate down to this latter date, after which Matthew would hardly use it without adding the name, as he does eight times within a few verses (chap. xxvii.).

§ Many other similar evidences of the very early date of the first three Gospels are given by Birks, *Horæ Evangelicæ*, Book ii. chap. iii—v.

pised Nazarene teacher at a "great feast." Again, while Mark and Luke, in their lists of the twelve Apostles, name "Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas," he himself writes "Thomas and Matthew," and adds the badge of infamy, "Matthew the publican."*

If the tradition be correct, as is now generally admitted, that Mark wrote under the superintendence of his "father in Christ," St. Peter,† then we trace also the authorship of his Gospel in its pages. For besides other like features, it is noteworthy that in it Peter's faults are recited in stronger language, while less is recorded to his praise, than by the other Evangelists. ‡

The Gospels then are the genuine productions of the four men whose names they bear. Now, these four men had certainly every opportunity of knowing the truth respecting the events they record, two being eye-witnesses of, and actors in the scenes described, and two being intimately acquainted with others similarly qualified. They must, therefore, be regarded as trustworthy historians, or else as conscious and intentional deceivers. Modern infidelity, however, compelled to abandon this latter theory, has taken refuge, as I have said, in Ideology. But the early date of the Gospels completely refutes this new error, for even if we fix it so late as the year 60 A.D. or thereabouts, thirty years would be utterly insufficient for the growth of so complicated a system of myths. The proofs, therefore, of the *genuineness* of the New Testament narrative, are proofs equally decisive of its *authenticity*, i.e., of its *historic accuracy;* but we have also a multiplicity of independent testimony to the truth of the facts recorded, which it may be well hastily to review.

The scantiness and incidental character of the notices of the events from which Christianity sprang, and which attended its early progress, that occur in the profane literature of the day, have often been a prominent subject of sceptical objection. Since, however, the unquestioned general fact of the extraordinary progress of the new religion receives as slight a notice, it is clear that this scantiness of secular testimony must be referred to some other cause than the non-occurrence of the events. And is not the cause obvious? Is not the reticence palpably *intentional?* If such writers as Seneca, Arrian, and Pausanias, ignore Christianity, when an allusion to it would have

* Comp. Matt. ix. 9, 10, with Luke v. 27—29; and Matt. x. 3, with Mark iii. 18, Luke vi. 14.

† See 1 Pet. v. 13. Alford thinks that Peter had no share in the composition of the Gospel, but that it bears traces of his ordinary influence over Mark's mind, *Greek Test.*, vol. i., *Prolegomena*, chap. iii. § 2.

‡ See Mark viii. 33; xiv. 29—31, 66—72, compared with the parallel passages in the other Gospels. Many notices of Peter in these latter are not found in Mark.

fallen in well with the design of their works, does not their silence clearly proceed from motives of pride, of policy, or of attachment to the old faith, and does it not indicate the importance they secretly assigned to the new faith? Certainly the silence of Josephus is wilful. Born four years after the Ascension, and resident the first twenty-six years of his life in Judæa, he must have been familiar at least with the persecutions of the Church. Yet he never alludes to the Christians at all.* We cannot, therefore, impeach the accuracy of the Gospels because of the silence of a writer who so determinately avoids the subject.

Then, again, it is probable that many profane testimonies to the facts of Christianity have perished. We know that the first Christian Emperors, in foolish zeal, destroyed the works of Celsus and others who wrote against the Gospel. And there seems no reason to doubt the assertion of Justin, that a circumstantial report of the crucifixion of our Lord was furnished by Pilate to the Emperor Tiberius, and lodged among the archives of the State.†

Nevertheless, we are not without this class of evidence, and all we have is distinctly corroborative of Scripture. That Jesus lived and taught in Judæa; that He was executed by Pilate; that nevertheless a "vast multitude" (as Tacitus says) still worshipped Him as God; that despite great persecution they were noted for their exemplary lives,—all this would have been matter of history, on the authority of Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny, Trajan, Adrian, and Juvenal, had the New Testament never been written.‡

An examination of the Gospels themselves supplies us with evidence of their truth of a different kind, but not less valuable. We find that they frequently refer to the men, the nations, the countries, the customs and laws, the incidents of that age; and if these notices be correct, it is the best possible guarantee for the fidelity of the history; for, as Professor Rawlinson observes, "it is a task of the extremest difficulty, for any one but an honest contemporary writer, to maintain accuracy in the wide field of incidental allusion."

The civil rulers named in the four Gospels are the Emperors Augustus and Tiberius, Herod the Great, Herod Antipas, Archelaus,

* Professor Rawlinson says,—"I regard the arguments which have been brought against the famous passage in our copies of Josephus, concerning our Lord's life and teaching (Ant. Jud. xviii. 3, § 3) as having completely established its spuriousness. (See Lardner, *Credibility*, vol. iii. pp. 537—542)."—*Bampton Lectures*, p. 480.

† Rawlinson's *Bampton Lectures*. Lecture vii., p. 236, and notes.

‡ Ibid, pp. 475—478, where the quotations from these authors are given at full length.

Philip, Pilate, Cyrenius, and Lysanias. Of all of these, except Lysanias, a mere local ruler, we have accounts in profane history, with which the Gospels are in perfect, and in some cases singular agreement, both chronologically, and in respect of personal character and history.* I believe the only difficulties ever raised on this head are:—*first*, the silence of Jewish writers on the massacre at Bethlehem, which, considering Herod's notorious cruelty, and that probably not more than fifty children suffered at the most, is not surprising;† and *secondly*, an alleged error in the date given by St. Luke of the taxing under Cyrenius, of which there are at least two most reasonable explanations, the probably true one being that the *registration* began when Joseph and Mary proceeded to Bethlehem, but that the *actual taxing* took effect when Cyrenius was governor of Syria ten years later.‡

The political condition of Palestine at the Christian era was always anomalous, underwent frequent complicated changes, and is aptly compared by Rawlinson to that of the native States of India under British protection. Even the careful Tacitus falls into error in describing it; yet the Evangelists, in their incidental references to it, maintain an accuracy only possible with those who actually lived under such a *régime*. Besides the allusions to the various

* Take one instance of the positive agreement of the Gospels with profane history, in their allusions to the three Herods. Matthew (chap. ii.) places our Lord's birth during the reign of a Herod, and states that Archelaus succeeded him very shortly after, that he did not reign in Galilee, and that fear of his character induced Joseph to return to that province. From Josephus we learn the exact accuracy of these references. Had Herod died six months earlier than he did, the Gospels would, in other parts, contradict the history. Herod's dominions were divided among three of his sons, Archelaus (whose cruelty was notorious) taking Judæa, Philip Trachonitis, and Antipas Galilee and Perea. Now, St Luke mentions Philip's tetrarchy, and three of the Evangelists mention Antipas, —i.e., the Herod who murdered John Baptist—as ruling over Galilee. The adultery of the latter with Herodias, and his execution of John, are also confirmed by Josephus. Luke (chap. iii. 1) states that these tetrarchies yet existed when our Lord's ministry commenced thirty years later, but within two years after that date all the Evangelists represent the country as united under Roman authority in the person of Pilate. With all this the historical dates agree minutely. See Rawlinson, *Bampt. Lect.*, pp. 501—505.

† Bethlehem was but a small provincial town. There seems little doubt that the massacre is referred to by Macrobius (*Saturnalia* ii. 4); see Ellicott, *Hulsean Lectures*, p. 78, and notes.

‡ On this difficulty, respecting Cyrenius, see Alford, *Gr. Test.*, vol. i., *in loco*; Birks, *Horæ Ev.*, Book ii. chap. iii. § 10; and Rawlinson, *Bampt. Lect.*, p. 510. More recent investigation, however, renders it probable that Cyrenius was twice governor of Syria, which would remove all difficulty; see Smith's *Biblical Dict.* Art. *Cyrenius*.

forms and changes of rule, we find mention, for instance, of two military forces, two coinages, two modes of capital punishment, two measures of time, and a constant mingling of Latin and Hebraistic expressions, all of which indicate the semi-Jewish, semi-Roman condition of Palestine.* And it is worthy of notice, that the various divisions of Palestine named in the Gospels, Judæa, Samaria, Galilee, Trachonitis, Iturea, Abilene, Decapolis, are true of the geography of that age, *and of no other*, to which we have the testimony of Strabo and Pliny.†

With respect to the manners and customs of the Jewish nation, there is scarcely a word in the New Testament not confirmed by Philo and Josephus. This, perhaps, is no more than might be expected. But the descriptions of Greece, and other portions of the Roman Empire, are quite remarkable in their minute accuracy.‡ These are, of course, most numerous in the Acts of the Apostles, and so do not fall within my immediate present design; but the Gospels contain many slight references to Roman customs, and, in particular, all the minute circumstantials of a Roman trial and execution are given with unerring correctness.

So far we have seen the agreement of the Evangelistic writers with profane testimony. But there is yet another branch of evidence which deserves a passing notice. May we not call Christian witnesses? It is commonly, but most erroneously, supposed that the abundant testimony of Christian writers is of less value than the scanty admissions of their adversaries. But, as Dr. Chalmers has powerfully argued,§ is a man's evidence less impressive because his

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* See Matt. xxvii. 64, 65; Matt. xxii. 17, compared with Matt. xvii. 24 (the tribute-money—δίδραχμα—here named was an ecclesiastical impost); John viii. 5, 59, with John xviii. 31, 32 (a passage explained by the fact that crucifixion was peculiarly a Roman punishment); Luke iii. 1, 2; Mark xv. 25, with John xix. 14 (see note on page 140).

† Rawlinson, *Bampt. Lect.*, p. 495.

‡ Birks enumerates nearly one hundred examples out of many more, *Bible and Modern Thought*, pp. 90—98. See also Rawlinson, *Bampt. Lect.*, pp. 488—494.

§ *Evidences of Christianity*, Book ii. chap. 5. He argues that if Tacitus, for instance, had added to his statement about "one Christus," a notice that, after his execution, he rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, this sentence would have been allowed more weight than the whole New Testament; unless, indeed, it were rejected as spurious, because so unlikely to be written by a heathen, as is precisely the case with the famous passage in Josephus. "But let us," continues Chalmers, "conceive that Tacitus not only believed the fact and recorded it, but that he believed it so far as to become a Christian. Is his testimony to be refused, because he gives this evidence of his sincerity? Tacitus asserting the fact, and remaining

whole life is influenced by his belief in the facts he affirms?

This class of evidence is of three kinds. *First*, we may adduce the references to the statements of the Gospels which we find in the Acts and the Epistles; because, although they are all bound up together in our Bibles, we must not forget, nor allow others to forget, that they are all distinct works. Now, if the four Gospels had never been written, we could construct a brief outline of the Saviour's life from the occasional allusions in the Acts and Epistles. They give His descent from David, His residence at Nazareth, many particulars of His ministry and miracles, the temptation, the transfiguration, the institution of the Lord's Supper, particulars of His sufferings and death, and especially the fullest testimony to His resurrection and ascension.*

Secondly, we may adduce the numerous allusions to the facts of the Gospel history by the earliest Christian fathers; viz., in the Epistles of Barnabas, Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp; and in a regular defence of Christianity by Quadratus, Bishop of Athens, a fragment of which is preserved by Eusebius, and in which it is affirmed that some who had been the subjects of Christ's healing power had survived to the author's day. These belong to the first eighty years after the ascension. From the works of Justin, which date forty years later, we could compile an almost complete life of Christ; and after him succeed a crowd of writers, all witnessing to the truth of the same facts.†

Thirdly, we may adduce the testimony of the remarkable monumental sculptures and inscriptions in the catacombs of Rome.‡ These monuments prove conclusively that the number of Christians in the imperial city was far larger than is generally supposed, pro-

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a heathen, is not so strong an argument for its truth as Tacitus asserting the fact and becoming a Christian in consequence of it. We see men who, if they had not been Christians, would have risen to as high an eminence as Tacitus in the literature of the times, and whose direct testimony to the Gospel history would, in that case, have been most impressive, even to the mind of an infidel. Ought these testimonies to be less impressive, because they were preceded by conviction, and sealed by martyrdom?"

* See Acts ii. 22—24, 32—36; iii. 13—15; iv. 10: v. 30; x. 37—42; xiii. 27—31; xvii. 31; xxvi. 23; Rom. i. 3; 1 Cor. xi. 23—25; xv. 1—7; 1 Tim. ii. 16; 2 Tim. ii. 8; Heb. ii. 9, 18; iv. 14. 15; v. 7, 8; 1 Peter i. 21; ii. 21—24; iii. 18; 2 Peter i. 17, 18, and many other passages.

† For a good summary of this branch of the evidence, see Rawlinson's *Bampt. Lect.*, Lect. viii., and notes. Lardner devotes a large portion of his great work on the *Credibility of the Gospel History* to the accumulation of these testimonies.

‡ See an interesting article in the *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1859, where the information contained in the larger works on this subject is ably summarized.

bably averaging, during the last four hundred years, no less than half a million; that they underwent the severest persecutions; and, above all, that their faith was identical with our own.

Their faith! The value of these various Christian testimonies consists in their telling us *what the early Church believed.* If the writings of the fathers, and the inscriptions of the Catacombs, affirm that Christ rose from the dead, that may not demonstrate that He did rise from the dead, but it does demonstrate that a multitude of intelligent men believed so. Oh! but they were over credulous. Are men usually credulous when the practical result of their credulity will be to snap asunder the ties of family, friendship, and worldly interest—to demand of them a holiness of life before unknown—to subject them to insult, danger, and death? Surely, if millions accepted such prospects, they had first of all made sure of the ground on which they stood.

This preliminary enquiry concerning the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospels has paved the way to the subject of our more immediate consideration, the study of their internal characteristics.

It is obvious that any four Books upon one and the same subject may be viewed in two different aspects:—first, as distinct works; and secondly, as forming together one complete review of the matter considered. Under the first head we should investigate their respective designs, methods, and styles, and their mutual relation as supplemental to, or independent of, one another. Under the second head we should put together their respective accounts, mould them into one, and so endeavour to comprehend more clearly the various branches of the subject treated. I propose briefly to examine the four Gospels from both points of view; first, enquiring into their mutual relations, incidental harmonies, and alleged discrepancies, and the design, method, and style of each; and, secondly, suggesting and exemplifying some modes of studying our Lord's life, character, and teaching, as presented to us in their combined narratives; and this examination will reveal many internal proofs of the truth of the Gospels, independent of the historical evidence already sketched.

Taking first the questions respecting the entire or partial independence of the Gospels, let us contemplate the facts before us. We have four narratives professing to describe the career of one man. We find the second apparently little more than a reproduction of portions of the first; and the third, containing much in common with them, together with a still larger amount of new matter. We are struck with the close verbal agreement of many parts of these three works, combined with various unexpected seeming discrepancies. The fourth narrative we should scarcely suppose to be a

biography of the same man, so entirely different is its character; yet a closer comparison removes all doubt on this point, while the mingled harmony and diversity which characterise all four, make the question of their mutual relations a problem of no ordinary difficulty.

Now, if the four Gospels agreed together more manifestly than they do, if no difficulties existed, we should conclude that the writers obtained their information from the same sources. If, on the other hand, there were no passages closely resembling one another, we should conclude that their sources of information were wholly different. But taking into account these peculiar features of diversity and harmony, from what authorities can they have been compiled?* Several solutions have been proposed, but the number is now reduced to two, to which I must briefly allude.

The *first* theory is, that the Gospels were compiled, almost simultaneously, from the oral apostolic teaching, which was of course the only source of knowledge among the earlier converts. This theory is very lucidly stated by Dean Alford, in the *Prolegomena* to his edition of the Greek Testament† He observes that a necessary qualification for the apostolic office was to "have known all things from the very first," and so be able to "bear witness" respecting them;‡ that the oral instructions of the twelve to their new converts would, therefore, naturally assume a formal and authoritative character, and that their narratives of our Lord's life and teaching would be passed from one to another in the same distinct and unaltered form of words. Such valued oral accounts would, doubtless, be written down by many in portions; but in the continual transmission, words and sentences would necessarily alter more or less according to their importance. From these traditions and fragmentary writings the Gospels would be composed, and hence would arise the great verbal resemblance of many parts, combined, as it is, with constant alterations and inversions. This would, of course, only account for the parts common to them. The narratives peculiar to any one Gospel are presumed to be derived from various sources according to the opportunities of each Evangelist.

* It may be asked, If the Evangelists were inspired, what need had they of authorities? But the whole structure of the Gospels forbids the idea that the writers were mere machines. We may recognise fully the independence and differing characters and designs of the Evangelists, without forgetting that the secret control and guidance of the Holy Ghost preserved them from all inaccuracy, and overruled their researches and the natural efforts of their minds to the accomplishment of the Divine purpose.

† Vol. i, *Proleg.*, chap. i. § 2 and 3.

‡ See Acts i. 21, 22; 1 Cor. ix. 1.

The *second* theory supposes that the later Evangelists were acquainted with and made use of the writings of their predecessors. Mr. Greswell is the chief expositor of this view, and it is argued with great minuteness and ability by Mr. Birks in his *Horæ Evangelicæ*.

The main question is,—if St. Luke (for example) made use of the two earlier Gospels, can we account for his omitting much of their matter, and for the differences in those parts which he has in common with them? On the other hand, if he had not seen them, can we suppose that the oral tradition would have been so exact as to render parts of his Gospel almost word for word what had been written by the others? It would be impossible to argue the question within my present limits; I will, therefore, only express my decided preference for the supplemental theory of Mr. Greswell, although Dean Alford's adoption of the opposite hypothesis has led to a very wide reception of it among scholars.*

The existence of the mingled harmony and diversity which has caused such opposite opinions to be held respecting the origin of the Gospels, is of itself a convincing proof of their historical fidelity

* The objections to the Supplemental Theory are very forcibly stated in Smith's *Biblical Dict*, Art. *Four Gospels*, the writer of which adopts Alford's view. Yet the difficulties of the theory of oral transmission seem still greater. There are one or two considerations which have not, I think, been allowed due weight in the controversy. First, if Matthew, Mark, and Luke, wrote in entire independence of one another, they must have written almost simultaneously, otherwise it is incredible that the later writers should not have been acquainted with the labours of the earlier; and accordingly the oral transmission theory is made a ground for dating all three Gospels within the narrow limits of a year or two. But surely the dates should be *first* fixed, and the theory made to bend to them, and Mr. Birks' argument (*Horæ Evang.*, Book ii.) for placing an interval of five or six years between each Gospel seems unanswerable. Again,—if Luke's omissions imply ignorance of the facts omitted, and of the Gospels that record them, so also would the far more numerous omissions of St. John; but it seems impossible to suppose, although some have supposed it, that he, the only surviving Apostle, and patriarch of the Church, could have been ignorant of the three earlier Gospels. We therefore refer his alterations and omissions to the special purpose of his work; why not also those of Mark and Luke? Again,—the regular oral instructions of the Apostles, described by Dean Alford, would certainly have included many incidents of the Lord's life which are *not* common to the three first Gospels, as the raising of the widow's son at Nain, given only by Luke,—and the more important parables, only two of which are given by more than one Evangelist; and also some facts omitted by all three, especially the raising of Lazarus. How can we account for these omissions? Only upon the principle of *selection for a special design*; and this principle might explain all the difficulties urged against the supplemental theory, if we only possessed the knowledge necessary to apply it.

They are found to contain numerous "undesigned coincidences," of a kind similar to those in the Acts and Epistles which are so forcibly expounded in Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*. These coincidences are of the highest interest and value, not only as testifying to the truthfulness of the writers, but as throwing striking light on the narratives themselves. To give only one example:—St. John, in relating the feeding of the five thousand, tells us (chap. vi. 5) that Christ's question, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" was addressed to Philip. St. Luke tells us (chap. ix. 10), which John does not, that the desert place where they were assembled adjoined Bethsaida, but does not name Philip. From a third passage, in a different part of John's Gospel (chap. i. 44), we find that Philip had lived at Bethsaida, which at once accounts for our Lord's question being put to him, as one acquainted with the neighbourhood. In this and numerous other instances, the agreement is so simple and incidental, and the Gospels dovetail into one another so undesignedly, that we cannot resist the conviction that real facts are being recorded by honest writers.

But if a careful collation of the Gospels reveals these hidden harmonies, so also does it reveal some apparent discrepancies. These, however, have been made far too much of by the enemies of the faith, and some of its defenders, in their laudable but extreme desire to be candid and liberal, have been too ready to concede the existence of disagreement. Of the latter, Dean Alford is a conspicuous example. In his just indignation at the readiness of the old harmonists to adopt strained explanations rather than confess a difficulty, he seems to admit that to some difficulties there can be no solution.* But this is to concede that one or other of the Gospels contains actual error, for if all are really accurate, there must be *some* way of reconciling all discrepancies, even though we should wholly fail to discover it. And the examples usually given of insuperable difficulties are sufficient to prove that none such exist, for there is not one of which two or three reasonable explanations have not been given.†

There is the question of the two genealogies of Christ given by Matthew and Luke, which both profess to be Joseph's pedigree, and yet are very different. Two explanations have been proposed. The one which seems the favourite with modern scholars, is that

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* *Greek Testament*, Vol. i. *Proleg.* chap. i. § 4 and 7.

† The fact of expositors differing in their explanations of any given difficulty, is sometimes urged as a reason for refusing every explanation. But where there are three or four hypotheses, *each* of which is possibly the true one, the probability of one of them being right is surely increased, not diminished.

Luke gives the line of Joseph's natural ancestry, and Matthew the royal line through which the rights of the heir of David would legally come to him: just as we might trace our queen's pedigree up to James I., either through the succession of sovereigns, or through the natural line of the Princess Sophia of Hanover. The other explanation of the difficulty is that Matthew gives Joseph's descent, and Luke that of Mary; Joseph being not the *son*, but the *son-in-law* of Heli, *Mary's father*, a view which is much strengthened by a careful collation of the Mosaic laws respecting the rights of heiresses,* and by the fact that Mary is called by some early writers "the daughter of Heli." The great merit of this explanation is that it shows us how Jesus was *really* the Son of David, which the first does not. But either one is quite possible and reasonable, and no fair objection can be made to the harmony of the Gospels on such a ground.

Among other alleged discrepancies are the following:—That Luke is at variance with Matthew and Mark respecting our Lord's visits to Nazareth during His ministry, and His treatment there;† that Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are severally at variance respecting the healing of the blind men at Jericho;‡ that the anointing of Christ by Mary is placed by Matthew and Mark three days after, and by John the night before the public entry into Jerusalem;§ that John differs from the three other Evangelists respecting the day and hour of the crucifixion;‖ that the title placed by Pilate

* See an interesting note on Luke iii., in the Tract Society's *Annotated Paragraph Bible*. The view adopted above is curiously confirmed by a passage in Zechariah (xii. 10—14): see Webster and Wilkinson's *Greek Testament*, note on Luke iii.

† See Birks, *Horæ Evang.*, Book iii., chap. i. § 5.

‡ Mr. Ryle, in his *Expository Thoughts on St. Luke* (Vol. i., p. 288), gives the various explanations which have been proposed on this point. The most probable view is, that one of the blind men began to cry out as Jesus entered Jericho, and was joined by the other as He was leaving the town, when both were healed together. See Trench, *Notes on the Miracles*, p. 428.

§ St. John's account is the generally received one, his words in chap. xii. 12 being considered decisive. Matthew and Mark might well defer their mention of the incident until they were about to relate what stood in so close a connexion with it, viz., the treachery of Judas.

‖ As regards the *day* of the crucifixion, whether it was that before or after the Passover night, the arguments seem fairly balanced: see Ellicott, *Hulsean Lect.*, p. 328, and Birks, *Hor. Evang.*, Book iii., chap. ii. § 7. I incline to the latter's view that our Lord ate the Passover on the Passover night, and that the Pharisees (John xviii. 28) were intending to partake of the feast before daybreak. As regards the *hour* of the crucifixion (Mark xv. 25; John xix. 14), the most pro-

on the cross is differently worded in all four Gospels;* and that to weave the four discordant accounts of the events following the Resurrection into one harmonious narrative is an impossibility.† Now of all these difficulties one or more fair solutions have been offered, some of them approaching to certainty. And, in the words of Mr. Birks, "the attempts to establish a contradiction in the Gospels have, when submitted to a close examination, invariably failed Their usual result is to bring to light some undesigned coincidence, some delicate harmony of truth, which escapes the careless reader, and only reveals itself to a patient, humble, and reverent study of these oracles of God."‡

E. S.

(To be continued in our next.)

SCENES IN PALESTINE, AND THE LESSONS CONNECTED WITH THEM.

VI.—Bethany.

This Paper will form the concluding one of the present Series. We shall have visited together successively several spots in the Holy Land, each conveying to us by its historical associations many important lessons. Mahanaim, the refuge of the exile, on the eastern side of Jordan, was our first halting place, and then we pictured the ancient Jezreel, with its royal palaces and terraced gardens—a striking contrast to the little town which had sheltered the Patriarchs and King David. We lingered, in our third Paper upon the great stronghold of Judah, the city of Hebron, and recalled its

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bable opinion seems to be that St. John reckons from midnight, not from sunrise, and the same peculiarity may be traced in other parts of his Gospel, chap. i. 39; iv. 6, 52; xviii. 28 (Gr.): see *Hor. Evang.*, Book iii., chap. ii. § 12.

* The diversity in the four accounts of the title on the cross is Dean Alford's great objection to the verbal inspiration of the Gospels (*Proleg.*, chap. i. § 6). But the fact of its being written in three languages is the obvious key to the difficulty. There is good reason for supposing that John gives the rendering of the Hebrew inscription, Mark that of the Latin, Luke the original of the Greek, and Matthew (as his words perhaps imply) the substance of the accusation. See Webster and Wilkinson's *Greek Test.*, note *in loco*.

† This "impossibility" seems clearly accomplished by Ellicott, *Hulsean Lect.* Lect. viii.

‡ *Bible and Modern Thought*, p. 290.

deathless memories, stretching from the earlier to the later history of the Jews. We fancied ourselves upon the shores of the busy lake, the chief resort of the Redeemer during the days of His earthly ministry, the scene of so many of His mighty works. In our last Paper, we stood upon a solitary spot, the mountain which projects like a sentinel, and almost encroaches upon the blue waters of the Mediterranean. We recalled the great event which signalized the life of the prophet Elijah, his vindication of God upon the summit of Mount Carmel; and we remembered that from the slopes of the same mountain Elisha went to restore to the Shunamite her departed boy. We have one more Paper to present to our readers, and intend to describe one more of those numberless spots, with the name of which the pages of the Bible have made us so familiar.

The selection is taken almost out of our hands. We are passing through the period hallowed by the Church to the passion of her Lord. With that event, one spot, above all others, must for ever be associated. It is not Jerusalem, although there He suffered. It is not the Mount of Olives, although there He resorted. It is not Gethsemane, though there so earnestly He prayed. But it is the spot which He chose as His last abode on earth. The village to which, during Passion Week, He resorted night after night, until they bore Him to prison and to death. "He went out into Bethany and lodged there," St. Matt xxi. 17. Surely just now there can be no place in that land—abundant as it is in associations—so attractive as Bethany to the Christian. Bethany! of what a host of thoughts the very word is suggestive. Let us strive to realize,—

1. The outline of its geographical position.

2. Those historical facts connected with it which are to ourselves the vehicles of immortal truth.

The Mount of Olives was a long ridge on the eastern side of Jerusalem, close to the city. Covered with its olives and oliveyards it was the most prominent natural object in the neighbourhood. Its myrtle groves, its pines and palm-trees, have long since disappeared; but Canon Stanley says, "its fig-trees and olive-trees yet remain." It formed a great natural bulwark against any eastern invader. Before the temple was built it was, during the reign of Saul, the seat of the tabernacle; but its history is mainly connected with the New Testament. On the opposite side of this well-known mountain ridge lay the village of Bethany, perched on a broken ledge of rock, and forming the last collection of human habitations before the traveller reaches the desert hills which stretch to Jericho. Its distance from the Holy City was, as we gather from Scripture itself, about fifteen furlongs. Its name signifies the house of dates.

High in the distance may be descried the mountains of Terœa, whilst in the foreground is the descent to the valley of the Jordan. There were three pathways which connected Bethany with the capital, one a long circuit over the western shoulder of Mount Olivet; another, a steep footpath, right across the summit; and a third, which was in reality the continuation of the Jericho road over the southern shoulder of the mountain, and which was the most frequented. Such was the spot.

We pass on to dwell upon some of the historical incidents, with which it must be always associated. And the first shall be one which in no notice of Bethany could be overlooked. Of all the scenes in our blessed Lord's life none, perhaps, strike a more general chord in the hearts of men than the graphic story which occupies nearly the whole of the eleventh chapter of St. John's Gospel. Our Redeemer's sympathy with Martha and Mary in their sore bereavement, and the manifestation of His own grief, which it was impossible for Him to restrain at the grave of Lazarus, appeal, and not in vain, even to those who are, for the most part, indifferent to the Gospel. They assure us, more certainly than words, how perfectly human Christ was, even whilst perfectly Divine. They tell us that He is more than a Comforter, for that He participates in all the sorrows which cast their shadow upon our life. Thankful must we ever be that He wept by the cave which contained the body of his friend: not because the exertion of his power recalled the sleeper and restored him again to that desolated home at Bethany, but because it assures us that He, when bidden, stands even yet by the brink of every grave, to staunch the tears of all who look to Him as the resurrection and the life.

But we advance from a scene of grief, to dwell upon a scene of triumph. It was from hence that our blessed Lord made His last entry into the city where He was that same week to be crucified. The circumstances of Palm Sunday have been familiar to us from childhood. We must often in thought have sketched the motley procession winding its way round the southern skirts of Olivet, the mingled stream of disciples, spectators, and children, waving the branches of the feathery palm, and spreading their garments across the dusty way, with Christ Himself as the central figure, lowly, and sitting upon an ass. We must have heard in fancy the strain, "Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord"—and as contrasting with it all, we must often have recalled how the Saviour had wept over the ungrateful and apostate city from this very spot. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not." Still this must be

perfectly familiar to those who are reading this paper. But what is to be the strain of their utterance, when the type is more wondrously fulfilled in the antitype? Will it be a cry of wailing, or a voice of welcome? Will they shrink from

> "The vast, the awful form,
> Girt with the whirlwind, sandal'd with the storm;"

Will they hear with agony

> "His voice and the thunders roar,
> His dreadful voice that time shall be no more?"

Or will they swell the throng who

> "Deep Hosannas raise,—
> Worthy the Lamb! omnipotent to save,
> Who died, who lives, triumphant o'er the grave?"

There is another incident connected with this sojourn at Bethany, which is so full of suggestive teaching that it must not be overlooked. "Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away," Matt. xxi. 18. The immediate application of this event, made by Christ Himself, was a declaration to His disciples of the power of urgent and genuine prayer; but it has another and striking lesson to convey. That same Lord expects us now, the trees of His own planting, grafted into His Church, to bring forth fruit unto God. The liberty of the gospel is not for the toleration of sin, but for the extension of holiness. As members of the purest branch of Christ's Apostolic Church ours is a fair profession, but it will be sad, indeed, if upon us He looks in vain for the produce of the Spirit; if the showers of grace have fallen upon a barren heart, we can only expect that, as useless to the tree, we must be lopped off; and, if separated from Him, we must wither away.

Yet once more, and the divine history of this little town is not then exhausted. St. Matthew and St. Mark both tell us that in those anxious days which preceded the memorable Passover, "when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto Him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His head as He sat at meat," Matt. xxi., Mark xiv. Some were indignant at this waste; but, perhaps, through the clearer light which now falls upon Revelation, we surely should exclaim that nothing could possibly be too costly for Christ. To lavish upon Him of our best, which, after all, is His

own gift—to expend for Him, with an unsparing hand, our time, our money, our talents, our opportunities, and to understand withal how unworthy the richest offering must be, is but an engrafted principle in the hearts of His truest and most grateful disciples. To emulate in some sort, however faintly, His own most unselfish love—to possess our deepest joy in any labour which can manifest our clinging affection to Him, this is to scatter round Him the perfume of the sweetest ointment, this is to be buried with Him in His grave, this is to be made ready for the blessed results of His joyful resurrection; and though we may have never seen the natural Palestine, nor have traced, with sacred interest, the very footprints of His ministry, still, walking with Him as an ever present example in spirit before us, it must be that we shall see hereafter the fairer land which is to be the eternal home of His Church, and that city coming down out of heaven, the new Jerusalem, whose Builder and whose Maker is God. M. E. B.

The Teacher in his School.

NOTES OF A LESSON FOR A FEMALE SENIOR CLASS.

"Miriam, the Sister of Moses."

Ex. ii.; xv. 20, 21; Num. xii.; Deut. xxiv. 9; Micah vi. 4.

The point of view to be taken to-day is Miriam's character as a *Sister*. It gives suggestive thoughts, both for counsel and warning, to those who stand in that relation. Read Ex. ii. 1–10. This is a history familiar to us all, and full of varied instruction. It might be used as a lesson on God's providential care, or of His faithfulness to His covenant, or of the uselessness of striving to crush those whom God has blessed. Every passage of God's Word is many-sided, but Miriam and her conduct is our subject now. She is supposed, at this time, to have been ten or twelve years old. In her, at this period, we may notice *trustworthiness*, — she was evidently depended on, and proved faithful to her charge; *intelligence*, — observe that while perfectly truthful, she does not let out, so to speak, her interest in the child so as to awaken suspicion of a plot; and *courage*, in not being afraid to face the dreaded tyrant's daughter, and to suggest a plan for the saving of the life of the babe.

She comes before us in this passage, then, as—

I. Miriam, the watcher over her brother's life.

How much depended upon her! Had she left her charge, grown tired of keeping watch, talked imprudently, she would have failed. What kept her at her post? Love. Take, then, a lesson on a sister's love. The influence of a sister over a brother is untold, when exercised from earliest childhood in love. Especially is this the case with an elder sister. Many mistake here; they think their superior age gives them a claim on a brother's obedience: but never forget that a sister's power is not in *authority*, but in *influence*. Let your brothers know and feel, by

every action, that you love them. A lad who feels sure of his sister's affection will consult her in many things. Do not let them ever suspect that you do not care to hear of their games, their school exploits, their companions. *Watch* over them, not to find fault, but to win them from evil. Try to make their homes happy. To do this, you must learn to be unselfish. Especially "watch unto prayer" on their behalf. Dangers are round them greater than those which surrounded the infant Moses. Let the prayer of a sister's love be, "Oh, that Thou wouldest bless them indeed, and keep them from evil."

Turn now to Ex. xv. 20, 21; compare with Micah vi. 4. We have here—

II. Miriam sharing her brother's triumph.

We read nothing of her in the interval; but, doubtless, she had marked his course with deep interest.

After the stupendous miracle at the Red Sea, we find her leading the women of Israel in the magnificent chorus, ver. 21. No doubt, beneath and subordinate to her praise to God, there was a measure of womanly exultation at the position of the brother who owed his life partly to her watchful care. How many a sister has done likewise—helped, encouraged, watched over a young brother, and, at last, received "a full reward" in that brother's success. Are you ever tempted to think lightly or hardly of the part which, as a woman, falls to you? Then you do not know the higher privilege and superior pleasure of ministering, rather than being ministered unto. Compare Matt. xx. 26—28. Remember Prov. xxix. 23.

When next we hear of Miriam, the crown has, as it were, fallen from her head. She is—

III. Miriam, the envier of her brother's greatness.

Turn to Num. xii. Observe verse 1. "spake *against*," not *to*. How much mischief is thus done, which a little mutual explanation would have averted! The ostensible cause of the complaint was Zipporah. After the circumstance mentioned in Ex. iv., it appears that Zipporah had returned to her father's house; and in Ex. xviii. 2—6, we read of her being brought again to Moses. Possibly Miriam, who had been with her brother in his wife's absence, was vexed at now losing the first place in his thoughts and regards. Whether this were so or not on her part, it is no uncommon sin; and sisters who have been very much to their brothers in early manhood have need to watch and pray against this temptation, which has embittered many a wife's life. They find it hard, especially if, as seems to have been the case with Miriam, they are unmarried themselves, to resign the first place in a beloved brother's heart to a stranger. Whence does this arise? From selfishness, from envy; look at Bible testimony of this latter sin, James iii. 14, 15.

But, evidently, both Miriam and Aaron were envious of Moses' position, verse 2. How this striving to be greatest mars the peace of many a family and of many a Christian band of workers, Prov. xxviii. 25. How unlike Jesus! See His teaching, Luke xxii. 24—27. Notice last clause of Num. xii. 2, and first of verse 4. How it marks God's anger! What was the punishment of Miriam? And Aaron suffered, perhaps, as much, or more, in her disgrace.

We hear no more of Miriam, but the fact of her death, Num. xx. 1.

Gather up the lessons, whether of counsel or warning, in brief application. "These things are written for our ensamples;" yet our one Exemplar is the "man Christ Jesus." Following Him, learning of Him, imitating Him, we shall "grow up into Him in all things," and glorify Him in every relation of life.

Bess.

NOTES OF LESSONS ON THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE, FOR SENIOR CLASSES.

The Books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

It is said by the Jews that Solomon wrote the Canticles in his youth, the Proverbs in his middle age, and Ecclesiastes in his declining years. They are all valuable, and have a like purpose—to instruct men in true wisdom. The writer of them, as we know from 2 Chron. i. 10—12, was specially endowed with wisdom, and he lays as the root of all knowledge, the fear of the Lord, Prov. i. 7.

In the **Book of Proverbs** we have a vast collection of short pointed sentences, each of which contains some precept of value in the practical duties of every day life. These are contained in chap. x.—xxii., the preceding chapters being an address from the Teacher to his disciples, exhorting them to seek wisdom as their highest good. This exhortation is renewed in chapters xxii.—xxiv., and is followed by a further series of Proverbs, supposed to have been selected from some larger collection made by Solomon (see chap. xxv. 1). The book concludes (chap. xxx., xxxi.) with the instructions given by Agur to his pupils, and to King Lemuel by his mother. Nothing is known of the history of these persons, but their words show us how, in all conditions of life, we may walk with God, and do justly to our fellow-men. The principal object of Solomon in his proverbial sayings, was to inspire a deep reverence for God, a fear of His judgments, and an ardent love for wisdom and virtue. To this end He sets before us the true character of all injustice, impiety, profligacy, idleness, imprudence, and every other vice; and by making us ashamed of them, endeavours to draw us to follow the better course he places in contrast with these various forms of sin.

In the Book of **Ecclesiastes**, or the Preacher, we have a confirmation of the same truth, derived from the experiences, sad as they were, of the writer of the Proverbs, since he had uttered the wise sayings in the former Book, after he had become deeply penitent for his idolatry and sin. He had been tempted to depart in practice from the precepts he had given; but he had found that mere knowledge of truth, and great wisdom, would not confer true happiness, or secure safety, unless brought by them to the fear and love, the service and worship of God, who only can make His people happy, or satisfy the desires of their hearts. In the first part of the Book he shows us what is *not* happiness (chap. i.—vi. 9) and then, by contrast to these mournful experiences of the vanity of earthly things, leads us to seek true satisfaction for our souls in God alone (chap. vi.—xii.).

The Song of Solomon differs alike in subject and purpose from both of the others. It is supposed to have been written by him on his espousal to the daughter of Pharoah. The name of God does not once occur in it, but as Ezra, divinely directed, included it among the sacred Books, both Jews and Christians have sought in it a spiritual meaning; and from the description of the endearing relationship and affection existing between a bridegroom and his espoused bride, they have looked upon it as a parable typifying the reciprocal love of Jehovah and His people (Psalm xlv.; Isaiah liv. 5, 6); or of Christ and the Church (Ephes. v. 25 – 32; Rev xxi. 2 – 9). Thus our Lord is the Bridegroom; His friends the angels and ministers; the bride is the Church, and her companions all who seek to belong to it.

Happy those who know and feel Christ to be to them "altogether lovely." The Spirit of God alone can make us thus regard Him, or fulfil the precepts of the wise King, or profit by the warnings of the preacher.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

WITH this Book the sixteen strictly prophetical Books of Scripture commence. The first four are called the *greater*, and the other twelve the *lesser* prophets, and each of these fulfilled a mission of warning or consolation to the people to whom he was sent, as well as foretold events in which they, or succeeding generations, were concerned. The language of prophecy is full of figures and images; and to understand even those already fulfilled, the study of these metaphors, the contemporary history of Scripture, and of the people and nations to whom they refer, is necessary. But there is also a spiritual meaning applicable to every believer which we should seek to discover.

Of Isaiah, we only know what he himself tells us (chap. i. 1). He prophesied before the captivity, in the days of four successive kings of Judah, from Uzziah to Hezekiah, for about sixty years, B.C. 760—698. Those prophecies delivered in the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, denouncing the crimes of the Jews, and announcing God's judgments, yet foretelling the distant Messiah, are found in chap. i.—vi. In the time of Ahaz, Isaiah foretold the siege of Jerusalem, the destruction of Sennacherib's army, and future deliverance in Christ (chap. vii.—xii.). The next twelve chapters contain the discourses relating to the several nations holding intercourse with the Jews. Twelve more (chap. xxv.—xxxvi.) refer to the reign of Hezekiah, predicting the calamities to come upon the people, and their ultimate restoration. The only historical portion of the Book is the account (chap. xxxvi. —xxxix.) of the invasion of Sennacherib, and the destruction of his army; and the remainder of the Book (xl.—lxvi.) contains twelve discourses, during Hezekiah's reign, predicting the return from the Babylonian captivity. Stretching forward to the days of the Messiah, then more than seven hundred years distant, Isaiah speaks of so many particulars respecting Him, that he has been rightly called the Evangelical Prophet, since his detailed description of particular events in the Gospel history would seem as records of past, rather than of future events.

Among the most striking of these are the predictions of the Divine nature of Christ (comp. chap. vii. 14 with Matt. i. 18—23; Luke i. 27—35; and chap. vi.; ix. 6; xxiv. 4; xl 5, 9, 29; xlii. 6—8; lxi. 1, with Luke iv. 18; chap. lxii. 11; lxiii. 1—4); His miracles (chap. xxxv. 5, 6); His peculiar character (chap. xi. 2, 3; xl. 11; xliii. 1—3); His rejection (chap. vi. 9—12 with Mark xiii.; xiv.; chap. viii. 14, 15; liii. 3); His sufferings for our sins (chap. l 6; liii. 4—11); His death and burial (chap. liii. 8, 9); His victory over death (chap. xxv. 8; liii. 10, 12); His final glory (chap. xlix. 7, 22, 23; lii. 13—15; liii. 4, 5); and the establishment and perfection of His kingdom (chap. ii. 2—4; ix. 2—7; li. 3—6; lii. 6—10; lv. 1—3, &c.).

In this Book, so conspicuous for beauty and force of language, and so full of important revelations of God's purposes, we are especially shown the perfections and government of God; His threatenings against impenitent sinners; His comforting assurances of pardon and peace to those who repent and truly turn to Him; the perfect atonement which God has Himself provided for human guilt; and the glorious triumph reserved for all those who accept the Messiah, whether they be Jews or Gentiles.

He who *was* to come *has* come. Is He *our* Saviour? There is none else.

The Books of the Prophet Jeremiah and the Lamentations.

As the time drew nearer when the judgments which Isaiah predicted were about to fall, so God's ambassadors became more sternly anxious to warn the guilty people to avert their fate. Thus Jeremiah, himself a priest, set apart from his birth to the prophetic office (Jer. i. 5), when the word of God was revealed to him, ceased not to warn, reprove, and exhort his countrymen, and to urge them to avert the wrath to come by a hearty and timely repentance.

From the thirteenth year of the reign of the good king Josiah, during the reign of his wicked sons, even up to the time when Zedekiah and the nation generally were carried away into Babylon, he continued his entreaties and denunciations as recorded in this book, meeting constantly with opposition and dislike, hatred and persecution from the people, and especially those of his own village (Jer. xi. 21; Luke iv. 24). A considerable part of his writings is narrative; the rest consists of laments over, and reproofs of the wickedness of his countrymen; earnest exhortations to repentance, fervent prayers on their behalf to God, and predictions respecting the destruction of Jerusalem, and the fate of other nations. He remained behind at Jerusalem when his countrymen had realised—too late!—the truth of his words, until he was compelled, by those who were with him, to retire with them into Egypt, where he delivered the prophecies contained in chap. xliii.—li. The closing chapter (being a short historical account of the taking of Jerusalem) was added after Jeremiah's death, probably by Ezra, as an appendix to his predictions.

Besides foretelling the fate of Zedekiah, the sufferings borne by the people hemmed in by an invading army, the destruction of Babylon, the downfall of many nations, and the future restoration of the people, Jeremiah looked forward to the times of the Messiah, specially indicated His miraculous conception (chap. xxxi. 22), His divinity and mediatorial kingdom (chap. xxiii. 5, 6; xxxiii. 14—18), and shadowed forth the new and everlasting covenant of the Gospel (chap. xxxi. 31–36; xxxiii. 8, 9, 26).

There is something very touching in the LAMENTATIONS of Jeremiah, expressing so tenderly and mournfully his grief for the desolation of Jerusalem, the captivity of the people who had despised his warnings, the calamities which had befallen the nation, and the cessation of the worship of the Lord whom he had so faithfully served. Though all had been ungrateful to him, he still loved them; and in these five distinct elegies he acknowledges that the punishment had deservedly fallen upon them for their sins; urges Jerusalem to seek mercy and pardon; encourages the people to submit humbly to their chastisement: contrasts their present degradation with their former happiness, and predicts their return from captivity; and finally implores the Divine favour to restore the former prosperity of the people (ch. i.—v.)

Sin is ever the cause of trouble; and when God mercifully chastens us with affliction in consequence, let us not fret and murmur, but like the weeping prophet mourn over our sins and those of our people, and supplicate for forgiveness.

The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel.

While Jeremiah remained behind in Jerusalem, when Nebuchadnezzar carried captive to Babylon Jeconiah and 3,000 of the principal inhabitants of Judea, Ezekiel, also of the priestly race (chap. i. 3), was one of the captives, and was giving a kindred message from his captivity near the river Chebar, about 200 miles north of Babylon, to that which Jeremiah was delivering among those who had not yet suffered the same Divine judgment. The Jews in Chaldea were lamenting their fate very bitterly, because the destruction of Jerusalem, predicted by Jeremiah, had not come to pass, and they envied most of their brethren, who were still safe in their own land. God, therefore, to prove His own truth, and to comfort His captive people, delivered to Ezekiel the prophetic gift, when he had been about five years in captivity, and from that time, for about twenty-two years more, he continued to exercise it in Babylon (B.C. 598—576).

Ezekiel (whose Hebrew name signifies "the power of God girding with strength"), after recounting his call to the prophetic office (chaps. i.—iii.), proceeds to foretel the impending captivity and dreadful calamities of the remnant of Judah and Jerusalem, as the punishment of their impiety, idolatry, and wickedness; the destruction of the temple, and the desolation of the land (iv.—xxiii.). Turning from his vision of what would befall Jerusalem, he next predicts the fate of the enemies and oppressors of the Jews—the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Philistines, the people of Tyre, Sidon, Egypt, &c.; and his vivid and powerful descriptions of their future state have been confirmed to the very letter by subsequent historians, and the exploration of modern travellers (xxiv.—xxxii.). Next we find a series of exhortations and consolatory promises to the Jews, which, while showing the justice of God's dealings with them, foretel their future deliverance under Cyrus, and the ultimate return of the people from their final dispersion under the Messiah (xxxiii., xxxiv.). The Book concludes with a wonderful vision respecting the Church of Christ,—that new city of Jerusalem, and that spiritual temple, out of which the waters of salvation were to flow (chaps. xl.—xlviii.).

Mingled with these general discourses are some very striking revelations of the course of God's dealings with mankind in all ages. See the awakening calls to repentance in chap. xviii., based upon the eternal justice of God, yet mingled with mercy; and the gracious promises of free forgiveness and acceptance, of a new heart, and a purified nature to be given to all who seek it, in chap. xxxvi. The vision of the dry bones (chap. xxxvii.), setting forth the restoration of the people of Israel, strikingly presents to us the only means by which the fallen nature of man can be raised from the death of sin to the life of righteousness (see Eph. i. 19; ii. 1).

There are some parts of this Book very obscure, especially the great conflicts described under the vision of Gog, the prince of the land of Magog (chaps. xxxviii., xxxix); and the events mystically spoken of in the last chapters, which, while they had a partial fulfilment, doubtless, in the restoration from Babylon, have a yet wider and more literal meaning in reference to events still to come.

Let us learn the lesson plainly taught by God's judgments and mercies, as shown by the prophet. Let it be our wisdom, also, to know where we ought to be satisfied with ignorance, and wait with meekness the revelation of His will.

The Book of Daniel.

Eight years before Ezekiel was taken to Babylon, Daniel, a member of the tribe of Judah, was a captive there, and remained throughout the whole seventy years' captivity (B.C. 606—534). He went at about his eighteenth year, and died at a very advanced age. Throughout his life he continued to exercise the prophetic office, and, from first to last, exhibited a noble example of piety, wisdom, courage, and fidelity. These were so conspicuous as to be especially noticed by Ezekiel (Ezekiel xiv. 14—20; xxviii. 3). In consequence of his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, he was placed by that monarch in a position of great eminence and power, and held high offices under subsequent kings.

The Book bearing his name is partly historical and partly prophetical. It is written in prose throughout—that portion of it relating to the Babylonian empire in the Chaldean language (chap. ii.—vii.), the remainder in Hebrew. In chap. i. we have an account of the early life of Daniel and his companions in their captivity; in ch. ii. Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its interpretation; in chap. iii. the calm, resolute, and devoted conduct of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; the Divine judgment upon the king's pride and arrogance in chap. iv.; the fate of Belshazzar in chap. v.; the piety and fortitude of Daniel when exposed to the lions for his faith's sake, and his deliverance in chap. vi.

The prophetical portion of the Book commences in chap. vii., and comprises various predictions respecting the four great monarchies of Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome. Next, under the vision of the ram and he-goat (chap. viii.) is typified the destruction of the Medo-Persian empire by the Macedonians, or Greeks, under Alexander. In the subsequent chapters, he declares the coming persecution of the Jews, and the desolation of Jerusalem and the sanctuary: he specifies, in the seventy prophetic weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, the time that should elapse from the date of the edict to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple to the death of the Messiah; and predicts many events to happen in the world up to the time of the general resurrection (chap. ix.—xii.). Especially does he foretell the atonement to be made by the Messiah "to make an end of sins, and to bring in everlasting righteousness" (ix. 22—27), and the universality of the kingdom of "the Son of Man" (chap. vii. 13, 14, compared with Matt. xxviii. 18; Eph. i. 20—22; Phil. ii. 9—11; Rev. xix. 16).

That there should be much in this Book not yet understood, or of doubtful meaning, cannot be wondered at when we recollect that Daniel's visions stretched forward even to the time of the consummation of all things, and the final judgment; yet as many of these predictions have already been literally fulfilled, so we may be sure will the rest be. In none of the prophetical books is there more of practical instruction and useful example than in this. The sorrows of the Jewish captives were made the means of spreading the knowledge of the true God among the heathen nations; the constancy and zeal of His servants promoted His glory among those who knew Him not; while the times of deepest humiliation were chosen by the Most High to make known the precious revelation of the great work of redemption, Dan. ix. 4, 21.

Have we like fortitude and zeal with the captive Daniel to bear the reproach of men, even to the risk of our life, rather than give up our faith in God? And do we realise, as we see how God rules all things in the world at large, that we are in His hand, and cannot resist His will, except to perish?

The Book of the Prophet Hosea.

Hosea, a contemporary of Isaiah, is supposed to have belonged to one of the tribes of Israel, and to have lived in the kingdom of Samaria, since his prophecies delivered during a period of about twenty years (B.C. 785—725) almost exclusively refer to the ten tribes, who had revolted under the first Jeroboam, and were in his time ruled by Jeroboam II. Still clinging to the idolatry of the calves at Dan and Bethel, they were fearfully sunk in vice and depravity; yet they seemed prosperous, and feared no danger to come, although their sins were even then preparing the way for their ruin. It was the life-work of the faithful prophet to warn them of the judgments which God was about to bring upon them; and although little attention was given to his words, he continued faithfully to exhort them in the evil times of idolatry, until he saw the captivity which he had predicted, actually come upon them.

The fourteen chapters of which the book consists, contain a series of reproofs, warnings, and encouragements to the Israelites who are sometimes addressed also under the title of Samaria, the capital of the kingdom, and at others as Ephraim, the tribe to which Jeroboam, their first king, belonged. Under the figure of a wife unfaithful to her marriage vows, the prophet denounces the idolatry of the Israelites (chap. i.), exhorts them to return to their allegiance, and promises them restoration to the Divine favour on their repentance and amendment (chap. ii.—iii.). Having denounced alike the sins of priests, princes, and people, and warned Judah by their example (iv.—vi.), he proceeds to declare, since they obstinately refuse to listen, that God will give them over to their enemies, and scatter them; but mingles with these threatened judgments promises of restoration from captivity if they will heartily repent (vii.—xiii.), and finally gives them the very words of supplication with which to seek for the mercy and pardon they so greatly needed (ch. xiv.).

While the hateful nature of sin and its future consequences form the burden of this prophet's words, and while he seems not to look beyond the fallen condition of his own people and their future state, there are, nevertheless, some bright visions of the Gospel dispensation, and of the days of the Messiah. The deliverance of Judah from Sennacherib (chap. i. 7), prefigured salvation by Christ; the dispersion of the Jews, and their future restoration and union with the Gentiles under the Messiah, are clearly foretold in ch. i. 10, 11 (see Rom. ix. 25, 26), and ch. iii. 4, 5; the resurrection of the body from the dead is also spoken of in ch. xiii. 14 in the very words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 55. The call of the Saviour out of Egypt is noticed in chap. xi. 1, and His resurrection on the third day, in chap. vi. 2.

Let it not be thought that the practical teaching of this book refers to a condition of depravity which has no counterpart in our own day. Unfaithfulness to God, ingratitude for past mercies, dependence upon human and earthly sources of strength and enjoyment, pride, injustice and wrong-doing, are sins still prevalent, and God's anger is still kindled against them. Our own heart's experience will tell us whether it is not so; and we shall do well to apply to ourselves the earnest invitation contained in chaps. vi. and xiv., urging sinners to return to God, and encouraging them with gracious promises of blessing; and also to follow the teaching of the last words of this prophecy. See chap. xiv. 9.

THE BOOK OF JOEL.

NOTHING is known of the personal history of the prophet beyond what he has himself told us, and some uncertainty exists as to the period at which he lived, although he is generally supposed to be a contemporary of Hosea, but to have addressed his predictions to Judah, in the days of Uzziah, when that king was trusting in his own strength and his heart was lifted up to his own destruction. 2 Chron. xxvi. 16.

The prophet commences by giving a description of a terrible famine, caused by an invasion of locusts and other insects, and also, under this figure, predicts the calamities to be inflicted by the armies of the Chaldeans in the invasion of Judea, and the more distant and terrible destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. In the most forcible language he pictures the dismay which these approaching calamities would produce, and represents the very beasts as joining in his entreaties that priests and people should, by fasting and repentance, and earnest prayer, incline God mercifully to avert from them such terrible judgments; chap. i. ii. 1—20.

Turning his vision from these days of wrath (which may also prefigure the great final Judgment) he is then borne onwards to the times of the Gospel, especially referring to the general outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which was to be one of its characteristics (ch. ii. 28—32; see also Acts ii. 17, 21, xxi. 9); foretelling the conversion and the restoration of the Jewish people, after their long dispersion consequent on their rejection of His sacred influence, in revealing to them the true and only Messiah; declaring God's righteous judgments upon the enemies of His people, and describing—under the emblem of a golden age—the perfection and blessing, the purity, glory, and prosperity of the Christian Church (chap. iii.)

NATIONAL sins are specially referred to in this Book; and we are taught that judgments falling upon a country never come without a cause, but for the wickedness of those who dwell therein, Psalm cvii. 34. Famine, pestilence, and the sword, are all ministers of God (Joel ii. 25), and in His hands chasten His people for their sins.

How are such calamities to be averted? There have been such in our own days, and in our own country. Even now the surrounding nations are not free from them. "Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning," was God's word by the prophet Joel in olden time, and it is still His message to all, when He punishes them for sin.

INDIVIDUALLY it is the same. But He will receive the prayer of the penitent, and will restore to each humble sorrowing child of His the tokens of His favour and blessing. Psalm cxlv. 14—20.

The Book of Amos.

After the days of Joel, God raised up Amos, "a herdsmen and a gatherer of sycamore fruit," and while he was following the flock (Amos vii. 14—15), called him to become a prophet. He is described as dwelling at Tekoa, a small town of Judah, four leagues south of Jerusalem, to which place he is supposed to have retired when driven from Bethel in the kingdom of the ten tribes, as described in chap. vii. 10—13, which chapter is supposed to contain his first prophecies in order of time. He began his mission two years before the earthquake which happened in the reign of Uzziah, king of Judah, (B. C. 810), an event regarded by Josephus and others as a punishment for that king's invasion of the priest's office.

Amos was especially called to prophecy to Israel or the ten tribes, to whom his words are chiefly addressed, although he also denounces Judah and the neighbouring nations who oppressed the Jews. The two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, under Uzziah and Jeroboam I. were prosperous, but they abused the advantages they possessed, hence the prophets endeavour to lead them to repentance.

In the beginning of this Book, Amos denounces God's judgments on Syria, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, and Ammon, for their cruelty and oppression to His people (chap. i.) ; and also upon Moab (chap. ii. 1—3). He reproves Judah for contempt of God's law, and Israel for idolatry, iniquity, and ingratitude (chap. ii. 4—16). He then expostulates with them, and calls the Philistines and Egyptians to behold the punishment of Samaria and the ten tribes for their sins (chap. iii.); reproves the Israelites for their luxury and oppression, warning them of God's threatened vengeance (chap. iv.) ; laments over their impending destruction, and describes the captivity of the scornful presumptuous and hypocritical people (chap. v.) ; denounces God's judgments upon the self-confident and self-indulgent (chap. vi.) ; and describes the certainty, nearness, and severity of His judgments, under five visions, of grass-hoppers, fire, a plumb-lime, a basket of summer fruits, and the Lord standing by the altar (chap. vii.—ix.). With these clear intimations of the coming captivity of the ten tribes, He also gives a promise that the remnant shall be preserved (ix. 8—10), and that the conversion and restoration of Israel (ix. 11—15), shall form one of the glories of the kingdom of the Messiah: see His words quoted in Acts xv. 16.

How long God bears with the rebellion and wickedness of His people! In how many ways, and how earnestly and patiently, He warns them that luxury, self-indulgence, injustice, and oppression of others and forgetfulness of Him, must be their ruin! Yet when they continue obstinately impenitent, the judgment surely comes.

Let us also take heed: for if God spared not the chosen people of old, why should He spare us, who, when they fell away, were admitted by favour into their privileges? Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God, and be not high-minded, but fear: see Rom. xi. 17—24.

The Book of Obadiah.

The Vision of Obadiah is contained in 21 verses. Nothing certain is known respecting him, nor of the exact period at which his prophecy was made known, but he is generally considered to have been contemporary with Jeremiah and Ezekiel (B.C. 588—583), and to have delivered his prophecy between the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the destruction of Idumea by the same monarch,—an event which took place a few years afterwards, during the period in which that king was employed in the siege of Tyre.

In this short book he predicts the subjugation and ruin of the Edomites by the Chaldeans, and finally by the Jews, whom they had treated most cruelly when brought low by other enemies. The people of Idumea, or Edom, were descendants of Esau, and were thus brethren of the Jews, as the descendants of Jacob. Strong in their own fastnesses in the clefts of the rock (v. 3), proud of their successful resistance of their enemies (v. 9), they rejoiced to see the affliction of the children of Judah, and added to the distress of the Jews after the capture of their city (v. 10—14).

To punish such base oppression of their brethren, the prophet declared that God would destroy their fastnesses, and remove them from their place among the nations,—a sentence which was carried out, first, when Nebuchadnezzar dispossessed them of the greater part of Arabia Petræa; and, secondly, after the return of the Jews under Cyrus, when the Maccabees become masters of the whole land of Edom, and compelled the people to embrace the Jewish religion or to seek another country. Thus they ceased to be a nation, those who did not become proselytes to the Jewish faith being mingled with the Arab tribes. So did God fulfil the word of Obadiah, that because the people of Edom had done violence to their brother Jacob, by taking advantage of his calamity, they should "be cut off for ever" (v. 10); and thus it has come to pass that there is not "any remaining of the house of Esau." (v. 18).

In this prophecy and its fulfilment, a useful lesson is given against vain confidence in earthly strength and prosperity, and malicious exultation at the downfall of others. Another thought is suggested by the prophet, that, though in time of adversity, God's people may meet with cruelty where they might naturally look for kindness, yet, if they hold fast to God, He will secure their final triumph.

The close of this book not only promises deliverance from present foes, and restoration from Babylonish captivity to the ancient people of God, but by the saviours promised to them to deliver them from the oppression of their enemies foreshadows their final restoration under the Messiah, under whom "the kingdom shall be the Lord's" (v. 21, and Rev. xi. 15).

Christ *must* reign; let us submit to Him now.

The Book of Jonah.

By many the Book of Jonah is regarded as the first of the prophetical books, since he is supposed to have lived soon after the times of Elisha, as early as the latter part of Jehu's reign, or the beginning of that of Jehoahaz. He predicted the successes of Jeroboam II. the son of Joash, as recorded in 2 Kings xiv. 25, and from the description of him there given, he was a native of Galilee.

The book is a narrative of the mission he received from God, to go and prophecy against Nineveh, and thus to proclaim the ruin of a city much greater than mighty Babylon, then the wonder of the Gentile world, and conspicuous not only for its magnificence, but for its licentiousness and vice. The description he gives of his own perverseness and timidity is a striking proof of the truthfulness of the history, and of the inspiration of the writer, since such admission of sin is not found in merely human compositions.

First, he describes his attempt to evade the work appointed for him, and his flight through fear to Tarshish; but being overtaken by a storm he is cast into the sea, swallowed by a great fish, and remains enclosed in it for three days (chap. i.). His disobedience is thus punished; but upon his penitent supplication for mercy he is delivered (chap. ii.), but only to renew his task as at first assigned to him by God. He then goes to Nineveh, and warns the people of its intended overthrow. Urged by the king, the people repent, and are graciously spared (chap. iii.). Thus God's merciful purpose in sending him to warn the people is accomplished; His servant, however, grieves lest he should be thought a false prophet, and is discontented at the success of his preaching; but God reproves him, and by the instance of the withered gourd, justifies his pardon of the repentant Ninevites (chap. iv.).

Because of some difficulties in explaining the facts as thus recorded, some have supposed the whole narrative to be an allegory; but our Lord speaks of the most striking event mentioned in it as a fact, and cites it as a type of His own continuance in the grave for a like period (Matt. xii. 40). He likewise describes Jonah as a real preacher (Luke xi. 30), as is done in 2 Kings xiv. 25. We have simply to look at the whole history as a record of Almighty power, miraculously exerted to fulfil His own purpose. God raised the storm; prepared the great fish to swallow the disobedient prophet; maintained his life for three days and nights; and then caused the monster to eject him on dry land; and it was He who miraculously raised and as quickly destroyed the sheltering gourd. In all these things we see the power and wisdom of God; and in His long-suffering patience, both with His servant and the guilty people to whom he was sent, we see the tenderness and love of God for all His creatures.

Many lessons are suggested by this book:—the danger of resisting God's commands; the power of prayer in time of trouble; the nature and effects of repentance; and the purpose of the Gospel message to make us truly sorry for sin, and to lead us back to our allegiance to God.

The Book of Micah.

The writer of the prophecies contained in this book was a native of Morasthe, a village in the south of Judah, and was contemporary with Isaiah and Hosea, beginning to prophecy a little later than they in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, at the time when Pekah and Hoshea, the two last kings of Israel, were ruling over that fallen kingdom. He prophecied against both nations, and continued his labours about fifty years (B.C. 758—699.)

The book consists of seven chapters; the first, delivered in the reign of Jotham, foretells the Divine judgments against Samaria and Jerusalem for their sins, by the invasion of Sennacherib (2 Kings xviii. 13), and laments the terror and distress of the Assyrian invasion under Shalmaneser (2 Kings xvii. 4—6). In the second chapter, delivered in the reign of Ahaz, he reproves the people for their iniquity, avarice, opposition to God's messengers, and their attachment to false prophets; in that which follows he predicts the cessation of prophecy (iii. 6, 7), and the utter destruction of Jerusalem by Vespasian (verse 12), as well as denounces the cruelty of the princes, the falsehood of the prophets, and the false security and self-righteousness of the people. The last verse of this chapter, delivered in the time of Hezekiah, containing the prediction of the utter destruction of Jerusalem, was the means, by confirming the words of Jeremiah, of saving that prophet's life, see Jer. xxvi. 18—24.

Mournful as were these predictions, and deeply as the prophet grieved over the impending fate of his people (chap. i. 8), he had also a commission to declare the Divine mercy to be revealed "in the last days," under the Gospel dispensation. In chap. iv. he predicts the establishment of Christ's kingdom, the prosperity and happiness enjoyed in it, verses 1—5, and the restoration of the Jews, verses 6—13. The birth of our Lord at Bethlehem, as well as His Divine nature, His office and work, are all expressly stated by the prophet (chap. v. 2—4), who then proceeds to predict the destruction of the Assyrians and Babylonians, and the final purification of the Church (verses 5—15).

God's controversy with the Jews for their ingratitude, ignorance, and abuse of their privileges, their injustice, violence, falsehood, and idolatry, is contained in chap. vi.; and in the last chapter, the prophet in his own person bewails the decrease of godly men, and the growth of iniquity, but expresses his confidence in God, predicts the victory of his people over their enemies, and concludes with a hymn of thanksgiving.

Warning and encouragement are mingled in this book. On the one hand, we see the evil of sin in all ranks, the danger of self-righteousness, and the inefficacy of all sacrifices and ordinances without a spiritual mind and a holy life in those who use them; while, on the other hand, we are comforted by the assurance that the Divine mercy may be found in Christ by all who truly desire to love and serve Him, and to be partakers of His grace and blessing.

Living in the times to which the prophet looked forward, are we profiting by our privileges?

The Book of Nahum.

We have seen the prophet Jonah declaring God's judgment upon Nineveh, and the remission of the sentence upon the repentance of the people. Another generation had passed away; the repentance had been transitory, the sins of that mighty nation had been increased, and now another prophet is sent to pronounce "the burden of Nineveh."

This was Nahum, a native of Elkosha, a village of Galilee. He probably prophesied between B.C. 720 and B.C. 698, in the days of Hezekiah and Manasseh, or at all events at some time between the captivity of Israel and that of Judah. His name signifies "the comforter," and such was the character of his message, as far as God's people were concerned: for the ten tribes being carried away by the king of Assyria, his vision was intended to comfort them in their captivity, and also to console the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who remained in the land, and were besieged by the same enemies.

In the three chapters of his prophecy, forming one entire poem, Nahum denounces ruin upon Nineveh and the Assyrians, for their cruelty and tyranny towards the Israelites, and offers consolation to the oppressed people of God. He first sets forth in sublime language the justice and power of God, tempered with goodness and long-suffering (chap. i. 1—8), he then foretells the ruin of Sennacherib's forces, the subversion of the Assyrian empire, the deliverance of the Jews, and their rejoicing on the occasion (chap. i. 9—15; 2 Kings xviii.). The siege and taking of Nineveh by the Medes and Babylonians, the plundering and destruction, and the utter and final ruin of the city, as well as the extinction of the royal family for their oppression and cruelty, are predicted with great exactness, in chaps. ii. and iii., and were minutely fulfilled a hundred years afterwards (B.C. 612). So few traces of the mighty city remained, that in subsequent ages its exact site was lost, and it has only recently been discovered. Yet Nineveh exceeded in size and grandeur, in population and extent, our own great metropolis; and its overthrow must, at the time the prophet's words were uttered, have appeared as incredible as would a similar denunciation upon the capital of this empire. So singular, also, were the means spoken of by which its overthrow should be accomplished, that it might seem impossible on that account, yet even in these particulars the result proved that the providence of that God, whose word Nahum spoke, brought the event so exactly to pass, as to make men confess, "Verily this is the word that the Lord hath spoken, verily there is a God who judgeth the earth!"

As they heard these predictions, the faith of the true believers in God was strengthened, and they were encouraged to continue obedient to His will; while subsequent generations saw the predicted sentence executed upon those whom God had once spared upon their repentance, and proved the terrible truthfulness of His warnings of judgments to come.

See then, from this book, a warning against trifling with the forbearance of the Almighty, and the danger of abusing that long-suffering by which, in His mercy, He would lead us to repentance.

The Book of Habakkuk.

No certain information exists as to the birth-place or parentage of this prophet, but it would appear that he wrote in the Chaldæan period, shortly before the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar, which rendered Jehoiakim tributary to the king of Babylon (see 2 Kings xxiv. 1). From chap. i. 5—6, it is evident the Chaldæans could not have then invaded Palestine, and from verse 12 it is apparent that the ruin of the Jews had not then been effected. He was therefore a contemporary of Jeremiah, but much younger than that prophet, and is generally supposed to have prophesied between B.C. 612 and B.C. 598.

In the beginning of the book, which consists of three chapters, he indignantly laments the growing iniquity of the Jews (chap i. 1—4), and proclaims the Babylonish captivity as God's punishment of it (verses 5—11). In the succeeding verses (i. 12—17; ii. 1) the prophet humbly expostulates with God for punishing His people by means of the Chaldæans; to which God graciously vouchsafes a reply, in which it is declared that the captivity is near (verses 2—4), but that for the consolation of His faithful servants, it is the Divine purpose eventually to humiliate their conquerors for their ambition, cruelty, treachery, and idolatry (ii. 5—20).

The third chapter consists of a hymn or prayer, in which the prophet celebrates the deliverance wrought by the Almighty for His people in times past, in conducting them from Egypt to Canaan (verses 1—15), and prays for a similar interference to mitigate the coming desolation of the land; and finally resolves to rejoice in the mercy and goodness of God when all other comforts failed, (verses 16—19).

Thus, in succession, God announced the future overthrow of the oppressors of His people; for Obadiah predicted the destruction of the Edomites; Nahum pronounced the overthrow of the Assyrians, who had carried the ten tribes into captivity; and Habakkuk foretold the downfall of the Chaldæans, who completed the captivity of the remaining tribes. While the wicked Jews met with the punishment of their sins, there was hope for the pious servants of God among them, who were taught to repose on the power, faithfulness, and mercy of the Almighty in the midst of their afflictions.

To all, Habakkuk points out the duty of living by faith, especially in chap. ii. verses 1—4, a passage thrice quoted and applied to believers generally by the Apostles (See Rom. i. 17; Gal. iii. 11; Heb. x. 37, 38). It is this dependence upon God which sweetens the worst afflictions, and enables us to rejoice in the God of our salvation, even in the midst of tribulation, Rom. v. 1—5.

Happy those who love and trust Him, and cast all their care upon Him who careth for them!

LESSON UPON ACTS I. 1—12.

For the Sunday after Ascension Day.

T. We will read the first twelve verses of Acts i. Who was this book written by? We can find out, I think; see at the first verse whom it was written to?

C. To Theophilus.

T. Yes; now, if you turn to Luke's Gospel, verse 3, you will see to whom *that* was written.

C. To Theophilus.

T. Yes, to the same person; and in the first verse of our chapter in Acts, you see he tells Theophilus of a *former treatise*, of something he had written before,—so that the same person wrote the Acts as wrote St. Luke's Gospel; and who was that?

C. St. Luke.

T. And he says, also, what his former writing was about.

C. "Of all that Jesus began to do and teach."

T. Yes; that is what St. Luke's Gospel was about, "*until the time*" (you will see in the 2nd verse)—

C. "Until the day He was taken up into heaven."

T. So you will find Luke's Gospel ends. Read the last four verses in the last chapter. Well, in the chapter we are reading now, he tells them over again something of what Jesus did "*after*" He rose from the dead—before He went up into heaven; first, in verse 2, he says, "He was taken up *after* He had"—done what?

C. "Given commandment to His Apostles whom He had chosen."

T. Do you remember any commands He gave them?

C. "To preach the Gospel;" "to feed His lambs;" "to love one another."

T. Yes, these are some of them; though to "love one another" was not, I think, given after His death, but before. The great command was to "*preach the Gospel.*" Now, how long did Jesus spend with His disciples after His resurrection? You will see in verse 3.

C. "Forty days."

T. Did they know it was the very same Jesus that they had seen crucified?

C. Yes.

T. Yes; the third verse says, "He showed Himself alive after His passion by many *infallible* proofs." "His *passion*," what does that mean?

C. His death.

T. No; that is not the meaning of *passion*. Do you know the meaning of compassion?

C. Kindness—feeling for others.

T. Ah! *feeling for others*; and *passion* means *feeling* or *suffering*. Then after His *sufferings* were over, He showed Himself to be the same Jesus by *infallible* proofs, or things in which they could not make any mistake. Can you tell me some ways in which He showed Himself to be *the same*?

C. He showed them His hands, and His feet, and His side.

T. Yes; and Mary knew Him by His *voice*. And He *eat* with them. Now what did He *talk* to them about?

C. "The kingdom of God."

T. Yes; about things "*pertaining to*," or *relating to*, God's kingdom. The kingdom of God does not always mean the same. He is called *King* in different ways; for instance, you will see, in Rev. xv. 3, whose King Jesus is now.

C. "King of saints."

T. Then who belong to God's kingdom now?

C. All His saints—all His people.

T. Yes; if we are *His saints* we be-

long to His kingdom, and Christ meant His disciples and apostles to extend and increase His kingdom by preaching the Gospel, that people might believe and become saints. Now, read in Rev. ii. 15, what Jesus is to reign over one day.

C. The "kingdoms of this world."

T. Yes; that is to come to pass when Jesus comes back to reign over the world; and the Apostles were to make ready the way by preaching the Gospel; but were they to go out *directly* into all the world? Now read verse 4; then what were they to do?

C. "Not depart from Jerusalem." "Wait at Jerusalem."

T. What were they to "wait at Jerusalem" for?

C. "The promise of the Father."

T. What promise was that? Don't you remember what Jesus promised them?

C. That He would be with them. That whatever they asked they should receive.

T. Yes; He made these and many other promises; but He was referring to some particular promise—you will find it in John xiv. 16, 17, 26; and again in John xvi. 7, 13. Now, what was the promise?

C. That "He would send them the Holy Spirit." That "the Comforter should come to them."

T. Yes; and what was He to do when He came? Look to the verses over again; first, chap. xiv. 16.

C. "Abide with them for ever."

T. Yes; *stop* with them—not go away—stay in their hearts; then v. 26.

C. "Teach them all things."

T. Yes; and help them remember what He had said to them; and again, chap. xvi. 13.

C. "Guide them, and speak to them, and show them things to come."

T. And the Holy Spirit is called the promise of the *Father*; for *who* did Christ say would send Him? He said, "I will pray"—

C. "The Father."

T. "And He shall send the Comforter." And did not John the Baptist prophecy of this? What did John baptise with?

C. With water.

T. Yes; and he said that he that came after him—that is, Jesus—should baptize with—what?

C. "With the Holy Ghost and with fire?"

T. Yes; as we find in the third chapter of Matthew; and here, in the fifth verse, we find this should happen very soon now. How soon?

C. "Not many days hence."

T. Jesus now, you see, reminds them both of what *John* had said to them, and of what He had said to them, and tells them it was *soon* to come to pass. I dare say you can tell me on what day it was that the Holy Spirit came down upon the disciples.

C. On Whitsunday.

T. Yes; we shall read about it next Sunday. I told you just now that Scripture spoke of *Christ's kingdom* under different meanings; that Jesus was King in different ways—King *over His people* (and He is *your* King if you try to love, obey, and serve Him); but that He was also to come and reign as King *over the world*. Now, do you know how *the Jews* expected the Saviour, or the Messiah, to come?

C. They thought He would come as a *Conqueror*.

T. Yes; but do you know whose King they expected Him to be?

C. Their King—King of the Jews.

T. But did *the disciples* expect Him to come as King over the *Jewish people*?

C. No.

T. Now, just turn to Luke xxiv., and read verse 21. I think we learn from this, and other passages of the Gospels, that the *disciples*, as well as the other Jews, *did* expect that Jesus

came to reign over the Jews; and you will find that the next verse in our chapter shows us the same thing. What did they ask Jesus?

C. "Lord, wilt thou, at this time, restore the kingdom to Israel?"

T. What does restore mean?

C. Give.

T. No, not exactly; if I were to *give* a beggar a halfpenny, it would not be *restoring* it to him. If you had taken the next child's book, and I were to say *restore* it to him, what should I mean?

C. Give it him *back*.

T. Well, then restore means—

C. Give back.

T. The disciples asked Jesus, then, "Wilt thou *now* restore the kingdom, or give it back to *Israel?*" Who was Israel? You must read Gen. xxxii. 24—28. Now, who was Israel?

C. Jacob.

T. But then Jacob was dead long ago; then what did the disciples mean? That Jacob should come and have the kingdom? Or, whom did they mean by Israel here?

C. The Jews.

T. Yes; we very often find the name "Israel" mean *not Jacob* but *Jacob's nation*—the Jews. Then the disciples asked Jesus whether He would *now* give back—what?

C. The Jews' kingdom.

T. Why, who had taken away their kingdom?

C. The Romans.

T. Had the disciples any reason to expect that God would give back the Jews' kingdom? We must turn to some of God's prophets, and see what they said. Read Isaiah i. 26, 27; now Ezekiel xxxvii. 21, 22, 24, 25. What does God promise here?

C. That He will restore their kingdom.

T. But *when* does He say—does He say any time?

C. No.

T. And so we find the disciples asking *when* it should be; and when does Jesus say it will be?

C. He does not say when.

T. No; He tells them—what?

C. That it is not for them to know the time.

T. As if He would say, That is no business of yours. The angels, do they know?

C. It does not say.

T. No; but God lets angels know many things; now do they know this? See in Matt. xxiv. 36.

C. "No, not the angels, but the Father only."

T. Yes; God has not given any one power to know that time; it is like the hour of our death. God lets none of us know when it will be, so we should take care to be always ready. But Christ tells them there is something of much more consequence to them than the exact time when He shall give back the Jews' kingdom—that God would do something better for them;—that He had a far more honourable and blessed work for them to do. Read verse 8; He tells them that after they had received what God had promised—what was that?

C. The Holy Spirit.

T. Yes; that after the Holy Ghost had come on them, they should receive—what?

C. Power.

T. Power to do, what do you think?

C. Miracles.

T. Yes, they had power to do miracles; but something better than that as well—that would not save people's souls; but they had power to lead people to salvation. How?

C. By preaching the Gospel.

T. And if you turn to the Acts (or doings) of the Apostles after they received the Holy Ghost, you will see if they had power. In Acts vi. 8, you will find Stephen was "full of faith and—

C. "Power."

T. And so did great wonders, and

even gave his life for Christ's sake; and so, in Acts iv. 33, you find the Apostles gave witness to the resurrection. How?

C. "With great power."

T. So we find Christ's promise fulfilled; but what else did He tell the disciples?

C. That they should "be witnesses of Him."

T. What is meant by bearing witness, or being witness to anything?

C. Seeing it.

T. Yes; *being witnesses of* anything means seeing it; but being witnesses *to*, or *bearing* witness of, means—

C. Telling of it.

T. And *what* were the disciples to tell about?

C. All about what Jesus had done.

T. And *where* were they to tell about Jesus?

C. "In Jerusalem, and Judæa, and Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth."

T. Yes; and although the disciples did not actually themselves go all over the world, yet they went into a great many countries themselves, and since then other people have followed, and spread the good news farther and farther. Well, after Jesus had spoken these things, what happened?

C. "As they beheld, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight."

T. Do you know where this wonderful sight happened? You must read the last four verses of Luke's Gospel.

C. At Bethany.

T. Do you know who lived at Bethany? Don't you remember it was the town of—?

C. Martha and her sister Mary.

T. And if you turn to Matt. xxi. 17, you will see a greater than they used to live there.

C. "Jesus lodged there."

T. Yes, when He came for the last time to Jerusalem—and that was the place He had led the disciples to—what was He doing just before He went up? (*still* look at Luke's Gospel v. 50).

C. He was blessing them.

T. Ah, I dare say the disciples often thought of that last blessing! Often when a dear father or mother is dying, and about leaving their children for ever in this world, they give them their blessing just before they die—and so did Jesus before He left His disciples, and while He was blessing them He was—

C. "Taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight."

T. And what did the disciples do? Verse 10 says,—

C. "Looked steadfastly up toward heaven."

T. What does steadfastly mean? How do you think they looked up?

C. Kept their eyes fixed.

T. Aye, earnestly, eagerly, perhaps wondering whether He had really gone from them. I dare say they could hardly believe it was true. I dare say they thought it must have been a dream, as they saw Jesus rise higher and higher, and at last vanish in the clouds. Do you think they now believed Him more than before?

C. Yes.

T. Oh yes, I think they must now have felt quite sure He was indeed the Son of God—God Himself. Luke tells us (last verse) where He went.

C. "Into heaven."

T. And Mark tells us, and so do many other texts, what place He takes there.

C. "The right hand of God."

T. Yes, that is, the highest and most honourable and glorious place there. Now what else did the disciples see as they were looking up?

C. "Two men stood by in white apparel."

T. And who were they, do you think?

C. Angels.

T. And what did they say to them?

C. (Read verse 11).

T. When will that be?

C. At the judgment day.

T. Well, I think Jesus will come before then; for in Rev. xx., and also in the Epistles we read that Christ will come, and then *His own people*, all who *loved Him*, the dead as well as those who will be alive, shall reign with Jesus over the earth for a thousand years; and *after that* the books shall be opened, the rest of the dead arise, and all be judged. You see in verse 12, what mountain they were near—what mountain was near Bethany?

C. Mount Olivet.

T. You remember it is generally called the Mount of—

C. Mount of Olives.

T. And Zechariah, you will see, (chap. xiv. 4) tells us what place Christ will stand on when He returns.

C. The Mount of Olives.

T. Yes, so Scripture seems to say, that He shall come again at the very place where He last left the earth. After this the disciples, we read, went—

C. Back to Jerusalem—a Sabbath day's journey.

T. Do you know how much a Sabbath day's journey was? it was about a mile and a half. Well, we must now, for the rest of our time, talk a little about the ascension of Jesus, and see what good we can get from it.

Had the ascension of Jesus ever been foretold? read Psalm lxviii. 18, this is known to have been spoken (by the guidance of the Holy Spirit) *about Jesus*, because we shall find Paul refers to it as applying to Jesus. Then did not Jesus speak of His ascension? see in John vi. 62, and John xiv. 28. Now when a person goes out on purpose to do anything when he comes back, what do we suppose he has done?

C. What he went out to do.

T. Yes; and if he came in and *sat down*, should we think he had half done it, or finished it?

C. Finished it.

T. Now, you all know for what blessed purpose Jesus left heaven for a time, and came to this poor sinful world?

C. To save us.

T. Yes, and when He went to heaven, and *sat down* at the right hand of God, that shows—

C. That he had finished His work.

T. So that if any one were to tell us that our sins were partly atoned for, and that some other thing was to be done to make up, we could say that Jesus has gone back to heaven, has sat down there, and so we know that our salvation—

C. Is all finished.

T. Yes: now read Heb. x. 12,—we there find it said, that, Jesus sat down when? (notice the stops).

C. "When He had offered one sacrifice for sin *for ever*."

T. Suppose a person had been taken up for some crime, and sentenced to be transported for seven years, when would he be allowed to come back again?

C. When the seven years were done—when the time was up.

T. Yes, when the time was up, that is, when he had paid the full penalty. Or, suppose a person was put in prison for some large debt he owed, when would he be let out again?

C. When he had paid what he owed.

T. Well now, Jesus Christ agreed to take on Himself the penalty we had deserved, the punishment due to us for our sins, and for this He had to leave His Father's happy and glorious presence, and had to be banished from heaven—how long?

C. Till the debt was paid.

T. Yes, He took all our debts on Himself too, and so He had to stay away from heaven till He had *paid all our debts*—as well as till He endured all *our punishment*. He had to do both. And now, when we see Jesus received back to heaven, and remember how He was banished once for our sins, we should feel that He was received

back again because He had paid both all our—

C. Debts.

T. And also all our—

C. Punishment.

T. Or penalty: yet we know all is done completely, or Christ would not have been received back into heaven.

I remember a little boy once, who had been very naughty, and his father would not speak to him, but made him stay in his room for some time; but after a time his father let him come back again, and kissed him, and showed that he—what?

C. *Loved* him.

T. Ah—he *loved* him *all the while*, but when he received him back again, he showed that he—

C. Forgave him.

T. Ah yes, he *forgave* him. And *so* God was angry with Jesus, because He had our sins all laid on Him, and God treated Him as if it had been *us*, and hid His face from His dear Son; but when God received Him back again into heaven, it shows that He—

C. Forgave Him.

T. Yes, His Father was angry with His dear Son no longer; but it was our sins that Christ bore, so when God forgave, it was not Jesus, but—

C. Us.

T. So we see that Christ's ascension shows us that our salvation is all *finished*, our penalty *all* endured, our debts *all* paid, our sins and ourselves *all* forgiven—if only *we*—What must *we* do?

C. Believe on Jesus.

T. Yes, and then all these blessings are ours. Well, now, what does Christ do in heaven? Let us see whether He still remembers us now; read Is. liii. 12, Heb. vii. 25, and ix. 24. We see that Jesus does what for us?

C. Makes intercession.

T. Yes, He appears in God's presence *for us*, and *makes intercession for us*—but what does to make intercession, or to *intercede* mean?

C. To pray for.

T. Well, so it does; but it generally means to pray for, under particular circumstances;—for instance, if I saw a friend of mine, whose little child had behaved badly, and was in disgrace, and I were to *beg* he might be let off, I should be interceding, or, making intercession for the child. Or, if I were to see a man beating a boy, and wanted to intercede for him, where should I run?

C. Between them.

T. Well, now, that's just what *intercede* (or make intercession) means,—going *between* persons to make them friends. Then whom does Jesus intercede *between*?

C. Between us and God.

T. Yes, He appears *for us* in heaven—and when God would in His holiness and justice be angry with us, He sees Christ's blood, and He spares us. Now, suppose you wanted to ask our Queen for something, to grant some petition, and you happened to know some one very high in favour with the Queen, how would you send your petition to her?

C. By the person I knew.

T. And who would stand most chance of gaining what they wanted—*you*, or somebody else who had no friend in the queen's palace?

C. I should.

T. Well, now, Jesus appears in the presence of God—the King of heaven—*for us*—and so whenever we have any petitions to present to God, by whom should we send them?

C. By our friend—By Jesus Christ.

T. Yes; and *when* do we present our petitions to God?

C. Whenever we pray.

T. And can't you remember something Christ said to encourage us to present our prayers and petitions *through Him*?

C. "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, He will give it you."

T. Yes, that is in John's Gospel.

So you see another thing we learn from Christ's ascension, is that we have a friend in heaven who liveth to—

C. To "make intercession for us."

T. One who is always our friend; so that, as St. Paul says, we may come *with boldness* to God's throne of grace, and never be afraid to ask God for *anything*, for we have a kind friend at God's right hand—Jesus. And now, if you will read John xx. 17, as His Father is *our* Father, so He is our Brother, if we are *His* people. Yes, Jesus wants to be a friend to each one of you; He wants to be your brother, and He will present all your prayers to God Himself, and He will stand your friend before God. Now, you know, many people like to have *great* people for their friends, those who are rich and powerful; and this is just the kind of Friend we have in heaven. You know Jesus said, after He rose again, "All power is given—

C. "Unto *Me* in heaven and in earth."

T. Yes, and in other places He is said to be "Head over all things." If our Friend in heaven is so powerful and so rich, we may expect that He will give us some of the many things He possesses. But does the Bible teach us that He will give us good things?

C. Yes, He tells us, "God will give good gifts to them that ask Him."

T. Well, but that refers to God the Father; now, there are one or two texts that teach us that our *ascended Saviour* sends us down gifts from heaven. Read Ps. lxviii. 18. We there read that, *when Jesus ascended*, He "received gifts—

C. "For men."

T. Then, in Ephes. iv. 8, you read that Jesus—

C. "Gave gifts unto men."

T. So that Jesus, as the Son of God, receives gifts—whom *from*?

C. From His Father.

T. And then gives these gifts *unto* whom?

C. Unto *men*.

T. Yes, unto *us*. And what are these gifts that He gives us?

C. All good things—His help, the Holy Spirit.

T. Well, these are some of them. We read that God "will supply *all our need*, through His riches in glory in Christ Jesus"—*everything* we *want*, and the thing we want most is—what?

C. The Holy Spirit.

T. Why do we want the Holy Spirit?

C. To make us good, to give us new hearts.

T. Yes, we all of us need the Holy Spirit, for without Him we should never feel that we were sinners, never come to Jesus, never seek for pardon, never have our hard hearts softened, never be made fit for heaven, but die lost sinners. Now Jesus, you know, told His disciples that He would send them the Holy Spirit when He went back to heaven. But although Jesus died for every one of you, yet *you* will never come to Him for pardon, unless the Holy Spirit leads you. Then go to Him, and ask Him for this—the best gift He has to give. Just read the Collect for the Sunday after Ascension Day. Now make this your prayer. Ask Him for the Spirit day by day, to lead and guide you in the way to heaven, to keep you from sin, to help you to resist the devil, to make you holy, even as He is holy. And *whatever* you want, go to your best Friend, Jesus, and ask Him for it. You know if some friend had given us some very valuable present, we should think it very likely he would give us something of *less* value, if we wanted it. Now, Jesus has given us His own blood, His own self, and He will surely give us whatever else we need.

T. There is another thing we may learn from the ascension of Jesus. Turn to Christ's prayer for His disci-

ples in John xvii.; what was it He prayed for in verse 24?

C. That they may be with Him where He is.

T. Then Jesus wishes that, like as *He* ascended into heaven, so we may—

C. Go to Him and be with Him.

T. Yes, He wishes that we may go to heaven too, as He told His disciples, when He spoke about there being many mansions in heaven—"I *go*," He said,—

C. "To prepare a place for you."

T. Yes, and we know that we shall go there if we believe on Jesus, for Jesus came down *from heaven* to take our place, on purpose that we might go *to heaven* and share *His* place. Now, when are we to go there?

C. When we die.

T. Yes; but is there not some way in which we are to go there *now*? Read the Collect for Ascension Day. Now, don't we pray there that we may in some way ascend there?

C. Yes, we pray that we may in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell.

T. And the Bible tells us that we must do so too. Read Col. iii. 1, 2; and then Phil. iii. 20; and Eph. ii. 6. In what way, then, are we to ascend to heaven, and dwell in heaven *now*?

C. By faith.

T. Yes; but what do you mean by that? When you heard about our country treat last summer, *where* were your thoughts often for many days before you went?

C. Down at Barnet, thinking about where we were going.

T. And why did you think so much of it?

C. Because we liked to go there.

T. And why did you *expect* to go?

C. Because we were promised we should.

T. Well, then, if we have a promise from God Himself that we shall go to heaven, if we love Jesus, and if we believe on Him, and if we should *like* to go there, if the glories of heaven are worth having, if we *should like* to see Jesus who died for us, and thank Him and praise Him for His glory, oh! where should our thoughts often be now?

C. Up in heaven.

T. Yes, and when things happen to cross us and vex us, we should remember we shall not have to live in this world for ever, that we are only travelling through this world to a blessed and glorious home, and that home is the place where Jesus has already gone. Our home is—

C. Heaven.

T. Yes, I hope so. Oh, I hope there will not be one of us missing from it, but that we may all meet there and "be for ever with the Lord."

But though our time is gone, there is one thing more I should like to say. Now, suppose you were travelling through some country — we'll say through France—and coming to England, to stay and live here all your life, which language would you desire to know best, and which country would you like to learn the ways, and manners, and habits of—France, which you were only going just to travel through, or England, where you were going to stay and live?

C. England.

T. Yes, I think you would say (if you did not know either), "It doesn't matter much about my learning French, I shan't be there long. It doesn't matter much about my getting into French ways, but I must try and learn English, and get into English ways, and do as the people of England do." And so if you and I really belong to God's people, if we, indeed, look to Jesus and His blood to take us to heaven, what is the country we are travelling *through*?

C. Through this world.

T. And what is the country we are going to live in?

C. In heaven.

T. Then of what country should we try to learn the language and the ways?

C. Heaven.

T. Now the language of heaven is *praise;* the ways of heaven are *holiness*, and *truth*, and *love to God*, and hatred to sin. Oh, remember, you can't take sin there; it must be, keep sin and go to hell, or give up sin and go to heaven. Remember (whenever sin tempts you) this won't do for heaven, this won't help me to go to Jesus. Think often of that blessed and holy place, try and get more and more fit for the holy company that there is *there*, and then you will go there hereafter; and though we don't know what happy and glorious beings we shall be there, we know that we shall be *like Jesus*, and shall see Him as He is.

C. C. B.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Stars.

Good men are placed by God, as so many stars, in the lower firmament of the world. As they must imitate those heavenly bodies in their light and influence, so also in their motion; and, therefore, as the planets have a course proper to themselves, against the sway of the heaven that carries them about, so must each man have a motion out of his own judgment, contrary to the customs and opinions of the vulgar, finishing his own course with the least show of resistance. I will never affect singularity, except it be among those that are vicious. It is better to do or think well alone, than to follow a multitude in evil.

Bishop Hall.

A Coal covered with Ashes.

Nothing appears in this heap but dead ashes; here is neither light, nor smoke, nor heat, and yet when I stir up these embers to the bottom, there are found some living gleeds, which do both contain fire, and are apt to propagate it.

Many a Christian's breast is like this hearth; no life of grace appears there for the time, either to his own sense or the apprehension of others. While the season of temptation lasteth, all seems cold and dead; yet still, at the worst, there is a secret coal from the altar of heaven raked up in their bosom, which, upon the gracious motions of the Almighty, doth both bewray some remainders of that Divine fire, and is easily raised to a perfect flame. Nothing is more dangerous than to judge by appearances. Why should I deject myself, or censure others, for the utter extinction of that Spirit, which doth but hide itself in the soul for a glorious advantage?

Bishop Hall.

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

No. VII.

THERE are always wonderful charms belonging to those objects of which we speak with the appropriating personal pronoun. In some one respect, certainly—more probably in many, or in all respects—I cannot help thinking (whatever be the opinion of others) that *my* Church, *my* parish, *my* street, *my* house, *my* wife, *my* children, far excel those of other people;—a preference, perhaps, providentially ordered to furnish grounds of contentment to a spirit prone to grumble. Of all things else, however, *my* Sunday school is the last whose superiority I would for a moment give up. It was the first I ever knew. And this alone is enough to make it dear, and close my eyes to its defects. In youth, while the first freshness of the world yet remained, and the zeal of newly awakened piety was yet unchilled, I was introduced into *my* Sunday school.

My pastor (dear good man!) under whose earnest ministry my Christian character was formed, himself led me thither, and entrusted me with that infant class (the inevitable lot of the new teacher) with whose fidgetty waywardness I struggled on, now in hope, and now in despair, until a hardly bought experience invested me with something of a teacher's tact and power. What wonder, then, that *my* Sunday school,—the pleasant field for that opening love, and the remembered scene of that early discipline,—should be endeared to me beyond all others? What wonder that I left it with tears, and though since acquainted with other schools, that I look back with abiding affection, and call that emphatically *my* school.

And then it was one of the oldest amongst its neighbours—ranking, indeed, with the very first established Church Sunday schools, and having, some time ago, celebrated its jubilee. Venerable antiquity for a Sunday school! and another, and surely a valid ground for preference. Moreover, I love it for its workers' sake. Amongst them I formed precious friendships—some of which, alas! faded out quickly from the sphere of things seen, while others yet remain and afford the brightest joys of my life;—all of them, I trust, having on them the stamp of eternity to save them from perishing with the things of earth, and to secure them to me beyond the veil. From out of the same school, too, have gone forth ministers of the Gospel, and missionaries to Jews and heathens, some of whom have already done their work, and entered into rest, while others yet remain, bearing the burden and heat of the day.

But I am forgetting that these things, so interesting to me, to my readers are ordinary and prosaic matters;—nor would I have said so much were there not a sense in which *my* Sunday school is also yours, and yours is also *mine*, as expressed in the title given to these papers—*Our* Sunday Schools. As members together of one body, the honour and joy of the one belongs of right to the other. "If one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it," for we are "the body of Christ, and members in particular."

Well, I took, as I have said, the lowest class, and subsequently taught in almost every other successively, up to the senior class; and then, after seven years' apprenticeship, became the superintendent. Four years and a half I fulfilled, as God gave me ability, the duties of that honourable and onerous position; and then the same good Providence, which placed me there, took me away again from my Sunday school, and sent me elsewhere to labour.

There were twenty-three classes in all, and as many teachers, the number of children varying from 250 to 300. These were assembled, boys and girls together, in one room—the only division being a low partition, surmounted by red curtains. I cannot but think that, in spite of a few inconveniences, this arrangement is, on the whole, most advantageous. The school is *one*, and can be more effectually managed, the ruling power being strictly a *monarchy* (of course "limited"), which, doubtless, is in every respect desirable. The combination of the sexes, too, is serviceable to the children themselves, inasmuch as there are wanting, in each, elements of character, which are supplied only by some intercourse with the other; and, as in singing, the softer sweetness of the girls' voices mellows down and refines the louder and less musical notes of the boys, so, in other respects, each are gainers by the presence of both.

With regard to the teachers, very much the same principle holds good, and the experience of eleven years confirms me in the idea. Amongst the whole body of our teachers there always existed a strong feeling of general friendship, which showed itself by a little seemly gossip after school hours on Sunday afternoons, when various matters, touching the welfare and progress of the school, were generally the subjects of conversation. For some years there was tea provided every Sunday for those of the teachers who lived at a distance, or who, for other reasons, preferred remaining till the hour of Church service in the evening; two or three of each sex generally made up the party. The time passed very pleasantly, and I am sure also profitably, in such talk as was appropriate to the sacred day, and in singing of hymns when tea was over. I still look back upon some of the hours so spent, as among the most delightful and improving I ever knew.

This particular social arrangement has ceased for some time, as the teachers now live more generally within an easily accessible distance; but the same spirit, which prompted and governed those little gatherings, has now given rise to the establishment of a yearly excursion of the whole body of teachers. Half the day is taken, and some suburban retreat is chosen, which affords a few hours' rural pleasure, a friendly tea meeting, and a return at a reasonable hour. These things, so far from ever having occasioned any scandal, or other like unpleasantness, have, as I believe, been the means of preventing all such painful issues, by regulating and furnishing reasonable opportunities for the legitimate intercourse of our fellow-workers on both sides of the school.

Our senior classes, which are held in the same room with the rest of the school, have varied very much in their numbers and efficiency, according to the fitness of the teachers for that most difficult part of Sunday school work; local circumstances, moreover, sometimes considerably affected their vitality. Yet, one time taken with another, their average state has been decidedly good. If there were no other fruit, it would be not a little, that the present teacher of the first class boys was once himself a scholar, and that the whole staff of teachers has, at this time, no less than one third of their number who were, not very long ago, in the senior classes. But besides these, amongst the old scholars, on whom I have been enabled to keep my eye, some are teachers in other schools, and many are creditably filling various stations, and leading virtuous and Christian lives.

Addresses are delivered to the children twice every Sunday; in the morning, by the rector, bearing upon some subject connected with the order of the Ecclesiastical Year; and, in the afternoon, by the rector and superintendent alternately, upon the subject of each Sunday's appointed lesson.

A lending library, of growing value, and now numbering 600 volumes, is used by about 100 of the elder children, who prize the privilege highly. The books have been well selected, and comprise some of the best modern juvenile works, chiefly, though not entirely, of a religious character. They are not distributed on a Sunday, but those scholars who receive tickets from the teachers for the purpose, come to the school-room on an evening in the week; printed catalogues are furnished (for which the children pay), and thus they make choice of their own reading, and call for number after number until the book they ask for is declared to be "in," and handed to them accordingly.

But perhaps the most interesting feature of our school, is the "Juvenile Missionary Association." This is co-extensive with the whole school itself. For each class a box is provided, into which every

Sunday the subscribers place their little gifts. Between £15 and £20 per annum has been the average amount of these collections. An interest is kept up in the details of missionary work by regular half yearly meetings of the Association, at which a report of the collections is read, and addresses delivered by missionaries or others. Much of the interest which is felt by the children in this work, arises from the special object to which their contributions are applied, the support, that is, of an orphan school under the auspices of a former Rector of the parish, who is now labouring in one of the colonies.

There is also a penny-bank in active operation. This is not limited to the scholars—although they and their friends *chiefly* make up the depositors. £200 or £300 per annum passes through the hands of the managers, and the effect is thought to be very beneficial upon the neighbourhood around. Frugal habits, and prudent use of money are by this means inculcated and encouraged, and cannot fail to be productive of the best results.

The infant class, consisting of fifty or sixty children, meet in a separate building, and are taught by a teacher specially fitted for the task. These children, too, have a separate service specially for their benefit. It occupies just an hour, and consists of a liturgy framed on the model of our morning prayer;—sentences, exhortation, confession, chants, &c., &c., all being represented in a simple form. There are first and second Lessons from the Old and New Testaments, not read, but *told* and catechetically enforced by the conductor of the service, each lesson occupying about a quarter of an hour. Thus with three or four lively children's hymns, the hour passes without the slighest flagging of interest on the part of the infantile congregation. Indeed, the more common feeling amongst them is one of regret that the service is so speedily over. Some of the happiest seasons I ever spent have been when these little ones have thus been gathered round me. And not only were they themselves pleased and happy at the time, but they remembered their little meeting for worship, and the instruction then given to them; many of them having their young minds stored with a knowledge of Scripture, both in its narratives and doctrines, which would be remarkable in children of twice their years. This is, I believe, the true way of training children very early to love the public services of our Church.

The school, I suppose, was peculiar in having no system of rewards. The approbation of their teachers was almost the only stimulus to regularity and order. And although it would be untrue to say that the aspect of the school during the hour of instruction was stiff and prim, or excessively quiet—yet all who know the school have admired the cheerful earnestness, and general good order always

visible. There was a tolerably loud hum of voices, but it was always the noise of hearty work, and animated catechising, and never of unruly inattention.

A triennial treat is given, in the form of a summer excursion for the entire day. The arrangements are on a liberal scale, and without any charge to the children whatever. None are allowed to participate in it except such as have been admitted at least six weeks prior to the day of the treat, and have merited it by regular attendance and good behaviour. This less frequent holiday is more desirable than an annual excursion. The excitement is greater, it is more highly prized, and is looked upon less as a right which the children may claim.

One other subject, and I think I shall have then detailed all the striking features of my Sunday school. Our meetings of teachers were less frequent than they should have been. A monthly meeting in various forms was at different times attempted, always with greater or less failure. The only meetings held are: 1. a Quarterly Meeting for the transaction of business, as the removal of scholars from class to class, and the consideration of plans and management; 2. a fortnightly meeting for prayer on Sunday afternoon after the school is closed, and the children dismissed. This last is most seasonable and refreshing. With hearts newly warmed with the day's labour, the sounds of the children's voices yet lingering in the ear, their smiles newly in the mind, the prayers have gone up so earnestly and fervidly, that the service has had about it an air of reality and life, which could hardly be at any other time. Besides which all the wants and aspirations of a teacher's heart are just then more fully awake, and more ready to give earnest utterance than in colder times, more remote from the actual work.

Prayer is after all the strength of the Sunday school teacher—without it, individually and collectively, our Sunday schools must lack power and usefulness for God. May He of His great mercy, pour out upon every one of us the spirit of supplication, and thus prepare us to receive those richer measures of His grace which will assuredly follow its united expression!

S.

Plans and Intelligence.

TEACHERS' PRAYER UNION.

In continuation of the plan of uniting Teachers together to supplicate for the Divine blessing on their work and on each other, on the morning of Tuesday in each week, we append a list of special subjects for the next quarter.

April 7.—For *the presence and aid of the Holy Ghost*, to guide both Teachers and Scholars in the way of truth.

April 14.—For *the Church of England*, that it may ever hold fast and make known the pure Word of God.

April 21.—For *the ministers of Christ*, that they may both by their life and doctrine set forth the truth of the Gospel.

April 28.—For *the Sunday School Institute*, and especially that a blessing may rest upon the Anniversary Meeting of its members.

May 5.—For *all Superintendents*, that they may by meekness and patience win both teachers and scholars to the obedience of Christ

May 12.—For *all Sunday School Teachers*, that they may lead their scholars to a saving knowledge of the truth.

May 19.—For *all Sunday Scholars*, that they may hear and receive God's Holy Word, and be doers of His will.

May 26.—For *the Sunday School Institute*, that its plans and operations may advance the Saviour's kingdom, and improve Sunday schools.

June 2.—For *the Queen and the Royal Family*, that they may be endued with all heavenly gifts and prospered with all happiness.

June 9.— For *the due observance of the Lord's day*, that it may be one of holy rest, and spiritual refreshment to the souls of men.

June 16.—For *Scholars who have passed into the world*, that they may never let go the things which they have heard.

June 23.—For *the parents and relatives of Sunday Scholars*, that they may form households abiding in the fear of the Lord.

June 30.—For *the Sunday School Institute*, that its publications and meetings may strengthen teachers in their work, and promote God's glory.

*** Copies of this paper may be obtained free on application, personally or by letter, at the office of the Institute, 41, Ludgate Hill, E.C.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND SUNDAY SCHOOL CONGRESS AT MOSSLEY, LANCASHIRE.

(From the Oldham Standard, and other Local Papers of Feb. 14th, 1863).

One of the most important gatherings, in connection with the Church, which ever assembled in this neighbourhood, took place on Saturday evening, in St. George's School, when about 1000 teachers, from the various schools in the Union, representing 5,400 scholars, partook of a most excellent tea. The school-room had been beautifully decorated for the occasion with festoons of evergreens, vases of flowers, garlands in great variety, mottoes (moral and Scriptural), and emblematical designs, which reflected great credit upon the Committee of management. After tea the Rev. J. C. Macdona, Curate of the place—in the absence of the Rev. J. Hextall, whose delicate state of health prevented his attendance—occupied the chair. On the platform we noticed the Revs. J. Bardsley, G. Venables, T. Floyd, W. H. White, G. D. Grundy, C. R. Brierley, J. T. M'Donough, and Frederick Norton, Esq., one of the Hon. Secs. of the Church of England Sunday School Institute, London.

The Chairman, on rising, said that that was the first of a series of Meetings which the Committee had not inappropriately denominated a Congress—they were to be held annually. Representatives were present from the following schools, viz.:—Staley, Milbrook, St. Paul's, Holy Trinity, New and Old St. George's, Dobcross, Hey, Friezland, Hartshead, and Mossley. Having called upon the Secretary to read the minutes of previous Meetings, he said he had invited the Bishop of Manchester to preside over that Meeting, but unfortunately his state of health would not permit him to be out in the night air. The object of the Meeting was for the good and welfare of the Church Sunday schools in the Union, and he hoped that the example set by them would be followed in other districts, and the interests of Church Sunday schools throughout the kingdom be thus greatly promoted. It had been arranged that three Essays should be read to the Meeting that evening by the gentlemen who had been appointed to write them, on various points of interest in connection with Sunday school tuition, and which would afford much instruction to those engaged in teaching youth. A brief discussion would follow the reading of each paper, if any one felt inclined to engage in it. He then called upon

The Rev. G. Venables to read the first paper. The rev. gentleman stated the subject to be "The Importance of the Church Catechism." It was one of some difficulty, and one which was not understood by Sunday school teachers in general. Many conflicting notions prevailed amongst Churchmen generally as to the doctrines propounded in the Church Catechism, but he believed the differences proceeded more from misunderstanding each other than any thing else. He believed that nine-tenths of the teachers did not understand the meaning of the words baptism, regeneration, begotten, &c. If men would condescend to explain to one another what they meant by the terms they used, many harsh words would never be uttered, and much anger and ill-feeling would never be displayed. He believed that the Church Catechism was

Scriptural and apostolical; it had caused a deal of controversy among the most learned in the Church, but his object in complying with the request of the Committee was not for the purpose of creating unnecessary disputes. All that he might say he hoped would be productive of harmony and good feeling. He had the same object in view as the vast body of Sunday school teachers whom he had the pleasure of addressing. They desired to teach the scholars what was right and true. Under the old dispensation no one was admitted to the Passover but those who were baptised. The strangers, that was those who were not baptised, were only allowed to approach the altar of burnt-offerings, but not allowed to enter the tabernacle, which to him was a most important circumstance. He did not wish it to be understood that he was of opinion that those who were not baptised could not be saved, but baptism was one of the means of grace, and ought to be encouraged in the Churches and Sunday schools. Nor, on the other hand, did he believe that baptism would of itself secure us from condemnation, but it was a privilege by which those who were baptised were admitted into covenant with God. Baptism ought to be encouraged in the Sunday schools, and the parents and scholars ought to be impressed with the importance of being baptised. It ought to be more generally practised and encouraged among parents and scholars. Many persons were of opinion that baptism was not at all necessary since the law compelling registration was passed, but the rite of baptism was just as necessary and important now as it was before that act was passed. Indeed, it is supposed that the rite of baptism had been previously performed. He then proceeded to explain the meaning of the phrase "child of God," as used in the catechism; the prefigurement in the old dispensation of the new; the meaning of the words, "a member of Christ," and other important passages from the Catechism. He pointed out the duty of godfathers and godmothers, and said he held a meeting every week, for the purpose of instructing the teachers in their duties, and wished for the speedy introduction of that parochial system which would enable the shepherd of Christ's flock to attend to the whole of his sheep. He next urged the teachers to set a good example to their scholars, and showed the force and power which precept and example had among the taught. He concluded a most elaborate and learned dissertation on the Church Catechism amidst loud cheers.

The Rev. G. D. Grundy then said he felt very much edified by the paper they had just heard read. He believed baptism to be the sign and seal of God's future blessing. He would, however, remind them that baptism could not save them unless they carried out the Divine precepts in their lives and conversation. Many, knowing that they were baptised, remained in a kind of passive state, as if they were neither heathens nor Christians. They might treat such as Christians, but they should remind them of their duties; they should take their pupils by the hand, and encourage them to proceed on their Christian journey.

The Rev. James Bardsley then said, with respect to the able paper they had just heard read, he believed in every word of it. There were too many Church of England schools, which were like little republics—the clergyman was scarcely recognised. There were too many masters. He did not wish to set up a minister as a despot; nor yet did he like unbridled democracy, for he was satisfied that schools would not prosper if the clergyman did not occupy a right position in them. After some pointed observations respecting the subject of baptism, and the practical teaching of the Ten Command-

ments, the rev. gentleman sat down amidst loud applause.

The Rev. T. Floyd was the next speaker. He said that he had intended to have read a paper to the meeting on the books which were proper to use in Sunday school teaching, and for introduction among the scholars. Some of the religious periodicals published by the Religious Tract Society were excellent. The "Leisure Hour" and "Sunday at Home" were good in their way, but the serials issued by the "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge," and the "Church of England Sunday School Institute," were the most unexceptionable publications, and best adapted for the purpose.

Mr. F. Norton, from the Sunday School Institute, said that the Society he represented was established solely for the support and improvement of Church Sunday schools. It was one of its foundation principles that the clergyman ought to be at the head of the school, and be, in short, the life and soul of it. What an anomaly it was for the teachers of a school to teach one thing and the pastors another! The school ought to be the nursery for the Church; but to make it such, it was necessary that the clergyman should keep a watchful eye over every child in it, and to direct their instruction, by preparing and arranging the course of Lessons to be given by the teachers. This it is impossible, in many parishes, for him to do: hence the Society was established to supply systematic Lessons to the various grades in the school. It furnished the teacher with short and easy lessons for the junior classes. He explained how these lessons were printed, and said they were almost all literal extracts from the Word of God. For the more advanced scholars several series of lessons had been prepared, so that Scripture might be methodically studied. The Society also issued publications for the help of teachers and superintendents, and issued monthly and quarterly periodicals on the management of schools, and for the guidance and encouragement of teachers. Some persons did not make very apt teachers, for though they might have a very good knowledge of the Word of God, they could not impart it to others. Hence the necessity for preparatory qualification for the work of Sunday school teaching, similar to that training given in national schools to pupil teachers. He then gave some excellent advice to the teachers of Church Sunday schools, and concluded by hoping that they might all be made children of God and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.

The Rev. J. Bardsley then made a few remarks on periodical literature, and pointed out the great and growing want of Church of England publications. Every cottage, he said, should be a Sunday school, and every parent a Sunday school teacher.

The Rev. G. Venables followed with a few observations on the same subject, condemning sensation novels, and thrilling romances as not fit to be read.

Mr. Frank Hunter read a paper written by the Rev. W. Hoare, on the best means of inducing the parents of scholars to attend the Sunday school.

Another paper was then read by a Sunday school teacher, on the objects and duties of teachers.

Mr. Shaw then moved a vote of thanks to the clergymen who had attended the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. H. Duckworth, and carried with acclamation. The meeting, though crowded, was very orderly throughout, and was opened with the Litany, (the entire audience joining heartily and solemnly in the responses), and closed with singing and prayer.

Sunday School Institute.

QUARTERLY RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

THE operations of the Institute for the present year were commenced by the

NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS AND SPECIAL COMMUNION FOR TEACHERS,

at St. Dunstan's Church, Fleet Street, on the 1st of January. The address was delivered by the Rev. CHARLES DALLAS MARSTON, M.A., Rector of St. Mary's, Marylebone. The Sacrament was administered by the Rev. E. AURIOL, M.A., Rector of St. Dunstan's, assisted by the Rev. J. A. BAILEY. About 250 teachers were present at this service. The offertory collection amounted to £5 18s. 1d.

We regret that we cannot give a full report of Mr. MARSTON'S valuable discourse. He selected for his text Is. vi. 1—8, and from it first showed that God, having revealed Himself by this vision as the Lord of earth and heaven, attended by the seraphim, overwhelmed the prophet with a sense of the Divine Majesty, and of his own sinfulness; but comfort and encouragement were quickly sent to him, and at once he was devoted to his Lord's service; for though humbled by sin, he felt that God would enable him to speak to others in love and faithfulness. A parallel to this is the Christian teacher's course. We have first to know God as revealed to us in the face of Jesus Christ; to feel that our iniquity is taken away through Him; to realise, when chastened, tried, and perplexed, the comfort of His help and strength; and then, impelled with love for souls, to answer the Divine call, as Isaiah did, by replying, "Here I am, send me," and to go forth trusting in His guardian care to carry us safely through all the difficulties which may attend our labours in His name.

TRAINING LESSONS

have been given at the Rooms of the Institute as follows:—

Jan. 8, by N. HARTNELL, Esq., to a Testament Class, Matt. xix. 16—22.

Jan. 13, by E. STOCK, Esq., to a Bible Class, Psalm ii.

Jan. 27, by Mr. H. G. HEALD, to an Elementary Class, Tablet — "The Widow of Nain."

Feb. 19, by F. S. CLAYTON, Esq., to an Elementary Class, Tablet—"Prayer."

Feb. 24, by S. B. POWER, Esq., to a Bible Class, "The Call of Abraham."

A CONVERSATIONAL MEETING

for Teachers was held at the same place, on the 22nd of January, when the subject of "Separate Services" for Scholars was discussed, the conversation being opened by N. HARTNELL, Esq.

A LECTURE TO TEACHERS

was given at the same place, on the 10th of February, by Lieut.-Colonel ROWLANDSON, entitled "An Hour with an Irish Sunday School."

The following Meetings were held, in connection with the Institute, at the

CHAPEL OF EASE, HOLLOWAY:—

Feb. 4, an Address on "The Teacher's Work," by W. SANDBY, Esq.

Feb. 11, a Lesson to a Bible Class, by H. W. GREEN, Esq., Gen. iv. 6—16.

Feb. 18, a Lesson to a Testament Class, by Mr. HEALD, Acts xxvi.

Feb. 25, a Lesson to an Elementary Class, by J. F. REID, Esq., Tablet—"The Nobleman's Son healed."

AT CHRIST CHURCH, BERMONDSEY:—

March 17, a Lesson to a Testament Class, by N. HARTNELL, Esq., Matt. xix. 16.

March 25, a Lesson to an Elementary Class, by Mr. HEALD, Tablet—"Jairus' Daughter."

April 1st, a Lesson to a Bible Class, by F. NORTON, Esq., Luke vii. 1—23.

DEPUTATIONS

from the Society have attended at the following places:—

Mr. REID represented the Institute at the Annual Meeting of Teachers, Parents, and Scholars held on Jan. 20 (the Rev. W. Clifford in the chair), at St. Mary's, Spital Square.

Mr. NORTON visited Wimbledon on the 22nd of January, and delivered two Training Lessons and an Address to Teachers, at a meeting held in the Schoolrooms, at which the Rev. H. W. Haygarth took the chair.

On the 7th of February, Mr. NORTON attended a meeting of upwards of a thousand Sunday school teachers, held at Mossley, near Manchester, of which an account is given in another place.

On the 11th of February, he gave a Training Lesson, at a meeting held at Ewell, the Vicar, the Rev. Sir G. L. Glyn, Bart., in the chair; and Mr. HEALD delivered an Address to Parents and Scholars, on the same evening, in the adjoining rooms.

On the 24th of February, Mr. REID proceeded to Clifton, and, at a meeting at which the Rev. M. Brock presided, gave two Training Lessons, and delivered an Address to the teachers present.

On the 26th of February, Mr. NORTON gave a Training Lesson, at St. John's, Fulham.

On the 31st of March, Mr. REID delivered a Training Lesson to an Elementary Class, at St. Paul's School, Kilburn.

The only arrangements definitely fixed for the next quarter, at present, are the following:—

THE DEVOTIONAL MEETING

of the members, to be held at the Rooms of the Institute, on Tuesday evening, the 14th of April, at half-past seven o'clock, when the Rev. EDWARD AURIOL, M.A., will conduct the proceedings; and

THE ANNUAL MEETING,

to be held at St. James's Hall, early in the month of May. The names of the Chairman and Speakers will be duly announced. Admission by tickets only, to be obtained at the Offices of the Institute.

THE FUND IN AID OF TEACHERS AND SCHOLARS IN LANCASHIRE

has received further regular contributions from the various schools mentioned in our last Number, and also collections from the City Sunday School; St. Botolph; St. John's, Perth; Trinity, St. Pancras; Heigham; St. Philip's, Arlington Square; St. James's, Clerkenwell; Trinity, Newington; St. Andrew's, Haggerstone; Christ Church, Camberwell; St. Jude's; Mildmay; Merrow; Penwerris; Newhaven; Cross Street, Haggerstone; St. Mark's, Kennington, &c. The sums thus placed at the disposal of the Committee have been dispensed, as marks of brotherly Christian sympathy, in remittances to various schools in Lancashire and Yorkshire, where the distress has most severely pressed upon teachers and scholars in the Sunday schools.

The Committee have also thankfully to acknowledge the receipt of the following additions to the general

FUNDS

of the Society:—

DONATIONS.

Christ Church, Clifton . . .	5	0	0
Chapel of Ease, Holloway . .	0	10	6
R. H. Greenbank, Esq. . . .	1	0	0

	£	s.	d.
A Friend	0	6	0
Hon. and Rev. E. Stuart	0	10	0
B. J. Glover, Esq.	0	5	0

NEW ANNUAL SUBSCRIBERS.

	£	s.	d.
Mr. Winbush	0	10	6
G. T. Hart, Esq.	1	1	0
R. Dawes, Esq.	1	1	0
G. J. P. Smith, Esq.	1	1	0
Rev. C. W. Parker	0	10	6

NEW SUBSCRIBING SCHOOLS.

	£	s.	d.
St. Peter's, Notting Hill	1	1	0
Yorktown	0	10	6
St. John's, Angell Town	0	10	6
St. Clement's, Barnsbury	1	1	0
West Denton	0	10	6
Carrickfergus	0	10	6
Bromley	1	1	0
St. Philip's, Cheltenham	0	10	6
St. Mary's, Charter House	1	1	0
Richmond	0	10	6

	£	s.	d.
Lower Norwood	0	10	6
Garston	0	10	6
Maghera	0	10	6

It is scarcely necessary to inform the friends of the Sunday school that, in order to carry on continuously the work of the Society, it is absolutely requisite that its means should be continually augmented; and that, without such aid, its operations must be contracted, if not altogether suspended. Such an event would be, it is feared, a loss to the Church of England in its Sunday schools, and a hindrance to the promotion of the knowledge of God our Saviour among the children of the poor. Surely Christian help and sympathy will avert such a result!

Notices of Books.

SCIENCE ELUCIDATIVE OF SCRIPTURE, AND NOT ANTAGONISTIC TO IT: By Professor J. R. Young, 12mo., pp. 240. London: Lockwood & Co.

THE design of the author of this book, as he states, is "to prove, on its own principles that science is not antagonistic to Scripture: that the opposition between them that has been recently alleged, has been wrongfully alleged, and that in every one of the instances adduced in support of these allegations, science, so far from opposing, will be found, on careful and candid examination, to be elucidative of Scripture."

In pursuing this useful purpose, he has necessarily been called upon to discuss many of the arguments which the authors of "Essays and Reviews," and Bishop Colenso have of late employed to show that the discrepancies between the discoveries of modern science and the records of the Bible are so great as to render it necessary to surrender our belief in the literal sense of the accounts of the Word of God. Professor Young—who is himself a mathematician, and fully acquainted with the principles of natural science, as well as thoroughly convinced of the inspiration of Scripture and of the necessity of yielding to its Divine authority—brings together in a very small space, in answer to such objections, a large amount of scientific knowledge, and shows how reconcilable its ascertained facts are with the statements of Scripture, to which it has been opposed by many modern writers. Throughout the book, the author very carefully distinguishes between the well-established *facts* of modern science, and the *theories* assumed from them,—since most of the alleged antagonism between science and Scripture will be found to arise from confounding these facts and theories together.

The original condition and present

form of the earth, and the Mosaic cosmogony—the true and false views of the nature of miracles in general, and especially that of Joshua as discussed by Bishop Colenso,—the difficulties presented by geology and astronomy—are all brought before us and discussed in a fair spirit of intelligent and honest enquiry. Sometimes the author has unconsciously been led to ridicule the objections advanced by modern Bible critics, and to show their absurdity in a tone wanting, perhaps, in that reverence which he really feels for the great subject under consideration. But the book is, on the whole, a useful addition to the many defences of the truth of revelation, and of its agreement with the works and laws of the God of Nature.

MEMORIES OF THE PAST, AND THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT AGE. By Joseph Brown, M.D. Crown 8vo, pp. 172. London: Longman & Co.

THIS little volume is written by a venerable member of the medical profession, now in his eightieth year, and formerly attached to the medical staff in the Peninsular. His "Memories," yet clear and vigorous, go back as far as the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1791, and he has here collected them together, and blended them with the "Thoughts" arising from them. These are eminently sensible and suggestive, for they are the fruits of a matured mind and a long experience, not of hasty or transient impressions, and they are all strengthened by analogies between different periods, and above all, based upon true Christian principle. In this spirit he reviews briefly, yet vividly, the last sixty years of peace and war in Europe,—the cause of the present disruption in the States of America, and its probable consequences—and the progress of civilization in our own country, based upon religion and morality as much as upon intellectual advancement. The author next discusses the modes adopted for the reformation of criminal offenders, and then contrasts the several eras of the history of England, and the influence produced by each upon the minds of the people. As a thoughtful book on the great questions in which all are interested, we heartily commend it to our readers.

THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE AND REVIEW: Edited by Clergymen of the Church of England. Monthly, 8vo., pp. 48. London: Wertheim & Co.

THIS Magazine has now been two years before the public, and from the ability with which it is conducted, deserves to take a permanent place in our periodical literature. The articles are well written, in a true evangelical spirit, but without narrow-mindedness; nor are they confined exclusively to theological subjects, but include questions of social improvement, and plans for the well-being of the poor. Besides the leading articles, there are each month a series of copious notices of books in theology and general literature, and a corner reserved for suggestive thoughts and Biblical notes and queries. We heartily wish "The Christian Advocate" the success it merits.

SUNDAY ECHOES OF WEEK-DAY HOURS. By Mrs. Carey Brock, pp. 476. Seeley, Jackson, & Halliday.

"A STORY about the Collects—the story of a little boy's school life, and how he was helped in it by those very Collects which you learn every Sunday of your lives." It is long since we met with a book of this kind which has pleased us more, and most cordially do we commend it to our readers, especially as a present for boys in the upper classes of society leaving the precincts of a happy home, with its guardian care, for the miniature world of a school. And even children of a larger growth will find both interest and instruction in the application of

the well-known and beloved formularies of our Prayer Book.

HISTORY OF THE MORAVIANS. By A. Bost, Geneva. Translated from the French, and abridged; with an Appendix. London: Religious Tract Society. 16mo., pp. 408.

There is not a more instructive or more interesting chapter in Church history than that which is contained in this volume, respecting the origin and progress of that pure branch of the Universal Church formed by the Moravian brethren.

Like the Vaudois of Piedmont, the Moravians never submitted to Papal authority, but bore testimony to the simplicity of their faith, as early as the days of John Huss, and were greatly comforted, a century afterwards, to find a general Reformation accomplished by Luther and others in surrounding countries. Persecuted and dispersed, their churches destroyed, and their members hunted out and put to death, they retained the principles of their faith (which agree essentially with those of our own Church, corresponding, also, with its episcopal character, though varying in details of discipline and management), until a new revival took place, and Herrnhutt, the great settlement of the brethren, was founded in 1722.

It is at this period that Count Zinzendorf appeared among them, and from thenceforward he became their noble and devoted friend and supporter, and eventually their chief bishop, sharing in all their subsequent trials, and spending his strength, ability, and wealth in their service.

The missions of the Moravians to the heathen, begun nearly 130 years ago, in the West Indies, Labrador, and Greenland, and still continued at those stations and others, form an interesting part of their history; while the account of its internal management, and the mode in which each of its members is appointed to a specific work for the society or for the promotion of the Gospel, is especially deserving of attention.

The book before us, small as it is, tells of all these things in a lively and pleasing style, and intersperses the account with notices of the pious lives of many of the most distinguished of the brethren. The original French work has been abridged, and an appendix added to it, bringing down the history to the present time, thus furnishing a concise and graphic narrative respecting a people whose history affords striking proofs of the Divine blessing having long rested upon the community.

SPIRITUAL UNFOLDINGS FROM THE WORD OF LIFE. By Rev. F. Whitfield. pp. 250. John F. Shaw & Co.

THESE pages are, substantially, "Lectures delivered to a Congregation," and come before us in the shape of expositions of various prominent topics of Scripture. Much of Gospel truth in plain but earnest style will be found here, and many a profitable hour's reading.

PRAYERS, TEXTS, AND HYMNS FOR THOSE IN SERVICE: By the author of "Count up your Mercies," 12mo., pp 58. Emily Faithfull & Co., Victoria Press, Farringdon St.

ANY of our readers who may not have met with this excellent little book, will thank us for bringing it to their notice.

Notices to Correspondents.

Communications are thankfully acknowledged from Rana; W. S.; H. S.; M. A. S.; S. W. D. J. G. F.; Rev. G. N. S.; G. R.; E. S.; Rev. H. J. B.; Rev. W. S.; Dora; S B.; and C. E N.

The Editors will feel much obliged to their friends and correspondents if they will send any contributions for the next Number not later than the end of May.

Church of England

SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY

MAGAZINE.

1ST JULY, 1863.

The Teacher in his Closet.

A HANDFUL OF CORN FROM OLD FIELDS.

SANCTIFICATION.

As in religion, so in the course and practice of men's lives, the stream of sin runs from one age to another, and every age makes it greater, adding somewhat to what it receives, as rivers grow in their course by the accession of brooks that fall into them; and every man when he is born falls like a drop into this main current of corruption, and so is carried down with it, and that by reason of its strength and his own nature, which willingly dissolves into it, and runs along with it. In this is manifest the power of Divine grace in a man's conversion, that it severs him so powerfully from the profane world, and gives him strength to run contrary to the great current of wickedness that is round about him—in his parents possibly, and in his kindred and friends, and in the most of

men that he meets withal. The voice of God, that powerful word of effectual calling which He speaks into the heart, makes a man break through all, and leave all to follow God, as Abraham did. And this is that which is spoken to the Church, and to each believing soul, by the Spirit of God, "Forget also thine own people and thy father's house, so shall the king greatly delight in thy beauty." Regard not what others think, though they be thy nearest friends, but study only to please Him, and thou shalt please Him indeed. When God calls a man in this remarkable manner, his profane friends are all in a tumult. What needs thou to be more precise than we and all your neighbours? But all this is a confused noise, that works nothing on the heart that the Lord hath touched; it must follow Him, though by trampling upon friends and kindred, if they lie in the way. We see how powerfully a word from Christ drew His disciples to leave all and follow Him.

Leighton.

I believe that all rich speech is the fruit of a rich life; I believe that without this the tongues of men or of angels are in imminent danger of becoming sounding brass and tinkling cymbals; I believe that the more a man has to speak on spiritual things the more he ought to live, not in thoughts and self-raised emotions, but in works, and sacrifices, and in communion of spirit with all his fellows, if he would not make himself hollow and a lie.

John Hamilton Thom.

"Be ye holy, for I am holy." Children who resemble their fathers, as they grow up in years grow the more like to them; thus the children of God do increase in their resemblance, and are daily more and more renewed after His image.

Leighton.

A spiritual mind has something of the nature of the sensitive plant—"I shall smart, if I touch this or that." There is a holy shrinking from evil.

Cecil.

WHEN we consider that, on the one hand, every benevolent affection is pleasant in its nature, is health to the soul, and a cordial to the spirits, that nature has made even the outward expressions of benevolent affection in the countenance pleasant to every beholder, and the chief ingredient of beauty in the "human face Divine;" that on the other hand, every malevolent affection, not only in its faulty excesses, but in its moderate degrees, is vexation and disquiet to the

mind, and even gives deformity to the countenance, it is evident that by these signals nature loudly admonishes us to use the former as our daily bread, both for health and pleasure, but to consider the latter as nauseous medicine, which is never to be taken without necessity, and even then in no greater quantities than the necessity requires.

Dr. Reid.

Let us beware that we do not rest in a *form of religion*, without feeling the *power* of religion; for, most certainly, *imperfect conversions, a mere formal religion, a zeal for lesser duties, a forsaking of scandalous sins, and indulging in others*, will in the end be found as hazardous as the most profligate life. A profligate sinner may be startled by God's judgment; but a sinner who thinks himself safe, what *can* convince him? And, indeed (as one very truly observes), those are not the greatest enemies to religion that are *most irreligious;*—a *formal Christian* may do more hurt than an *Atheist.*

Bishop Wilson.

FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES.

Many wise moralists have represented the desire of revenge as a mark of a noble mind, and the accomplishment of it as one of the chief felicities of life. But how much more magnanimous, how much more beneficial to mankind, is forgiveness! It is more magnanimous, because all the generous and exalted feelings of the human mind are requisite to the practice of it: for these alone can enable us to bear the wrongs and insults of wickedness and folly with patience, and to look down with pity rather than indignation; these alone can teach us that such are but a part of those sufferings allotted to us in this state of probation, and to know that to overcome evil with good is the most glorious of all victories. It is the most beneficial, because this amiable conduct alone can put an end to an eternal succession of injuries and retaliations; for every retaliation becomes a new injury, and requires another act of revenge for satisfaction.

Jenyns, 1787.

It has been objected to this command (*i.e.*, to love our enemies) that it is extravagant and impracticable, and that it is impossible for any man to bring himself to entertain any real love for his enemies. But this objection supposes that we are to love our enemies in the same manner and degree, and with the same cordiality and ardour of affection as we do our relations and friends. Our Lord, however, is not so severe a taskmaster as to require that at our hands. There

are different degrees of love, as of every other human affection, and these degrees are to be duly proportioned to the different objects of our regard. There is one degree due to our relations, another to our friends and benefactors, another to strangers, another to enemies.

Bishop Porteus.

Hath any wronged thee? Be bravely revenged; slight it, and the work's begun; forgive it, and it is punished. He is below himself that is not above an injury.

Quarles.

A gentle person is like a river flowing calmly along; whilst a passionate man is like the sea, continually casting up mire and dirt.

Cameron.

Anger continued terminates in revenge, and by calling up the anger of the opposite party, a temporary disagreement is converted into an everlasting hatred.

Bacon.

Anger is the most impotent passion that accompanies the mind of man; it effects nothing it goes about; and hurts the man who is possessed by it more than any other against whom it is directed, for to be angry is to revenge the faults of others upon ourselves.

Locke.

Angry men are as ungrateful and unsociable as thunder and lightning, being in themselves all storm and tempests; but quiet and easy natures are like fair weather, welcome to all, and acceptable to all men.

Bacon.

Mr. Burkitt observes in his journal, that some persons would never have had a particular share in his prayers but for the injuries they had done him.

M.S.

It was the laudable ambition of Cotton Mather to say, "He did not know of any person in the world who had done him an ill office, but he had done him a good one in return."

M.S.

Tell us, ye men who are so jealous of right and of honour, who take sudden fire at every insult, and suffer the slightest imagination of another's contempt, or another's unfairness, to chase from your bosom every feeling of complacency; ye men whom every fancied affront puts in such a turbulence of emotion, and in whom every fancied infringement stirs up the quick and the resentful appetite for justice, how will you stand the vigorous application of that test by which the forgiven of God are ascertained, even that the spirit of forgiveness is in them, and by which it will be pronounced, whether you are, indeed, the children of the Highest, and perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect?

Chalmers.

A MEDITATION.

"This is the will of God, even your sanctification." 1 Thess. iv. 3.

"THE will of God,"—how absolute it is with its spring and source in His eternal purpose, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." We do not indeed know God's counsel, but we do know His will; the one is among "the secret things" which "belong unto the Lord," the other is revealed in holy precept, in pledged assurance, in direct promise, and in faithful history:—"He will have all men to be saved;" "It is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish;" "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." Why then are not all saved and sanctified? There is surely no other barrier than that so touchingly alluded to,—"*I* would have gathered you, but *ye* would not."

But who can tell the comfort of this revealed *will* to those who having received the gift of faith, have with it obtained the *right*, the "power to become the sons of God." They are made God's children by grace, as well as by adoption; and this grace implants, develops and nurtures the ever-increasing desire to be holy as God is holy, sanctified, set apart for God, "partakers of the divine nature." And when increasing self-acquaintance deepens the consciousness of being unlike God; or when the clearer manifestation of Him who is "glorious in holiness" bows the soul in self-abasement, saying with one of old, "Mine eye seeth Thee, therefore I abhor myself;" or when after struggle, and warfare, and conflict, we *seem* only to be further off from the image of God;—then who can tell the comfort of

the assurance, "This is *the will of God*, even your sanctification." Shall it not nerve us for renewed striving against sin, for "who hath resisted His will?"—shall it not breathe "thoughts of peace" in times of sorrow and trial, for "He doth not afflict willingly," but *this* is His will that we should be "partakers of his holiness;"—shall it not animate and cheer us in the darkest, gloomiest day to think, "I shall be holy, it is the will of God; and whatever be the needful discipline, the end is sure, it is my sanctification; and therefore without trying to hide from myself all that the words may involve, yet do I rejoice to lay my hand upon this word of 'God, the faithful God,' and say, 'Even so, Father,' 'Thy will be done.'"

But if indeed sanctification be our "heart's desire," then must we often be prepared to have our *prayer* denied, that our *desire* may be fulfilled. "For this thing," says the Apostle, "I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart. But *He* said, *my grace* is sufficient for thee." It *is sufficient*—sufficient for my support under the heaviest burdens, sufficient for my relief in the deepest anxiety, sufficient for my comfort in the most painful bereavement, sufficient for my need in its greatest intensity. His *grace* is enough, even when there is the "hiding of His *power*." It is free as the air, bright as the sunlight, refreshing as waters "springing up." Those who have most occasion to test its power will receive most of "the riches" of that "grace;" those who are emptied, as it were, "from vessel to vessel," shall know what it is to be filled with "the fulness of God,"—grace answering to grace, grace upon grace, grace eventuating in sanctification, glory, and eternal life. It is "manifold grace," guided by "manifold wisdom," it is the grace of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God;—it is enough—

> "Enough for each, enough for all,
> Enough for evermore."

"Now the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Faithful is He that called you, who also will do it."

Bern.

THE PLEASURES OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

PLEASURES! It is very likely that some of my readers may repeat these words with a rueful smile, especially if it happen to be on a sultry July day that they are turning over the pages of this Magazine. With fresh and acute recollection of stifling air, noise and dust, combined with continued struggling against the unruly wills of boys in actually "rude health," or the fancies and fidgets of chattering girls, they may even go so far as to doubt the real existence of pleasure in such a work. But cooler moments, cooler both physically and mentally, bring back better thoughts; and under the nobler influence of prayer and praise the petty annoyances shrink into very narrow dimensions, whilst the great end in view regains its ascendancy, and the work, trying though it be, presents once more sufficient attractions to maintain its hold. It must be so, for after many years' experience, and intercourse with a great number of teachers, I can recall but a very trifling proportion, who abandoned the work from any such unworthy motive.

My object then, in these few lines, is not so much to prevent any fellow-worker from turning away in despair, as to try and benefit the much larger number who (as I fear) fail to find in the Sunday school all the pleasures that really can be enjoyed there. There is such a thing as a capacity for happiness—and it has its contrast in a capacity for being always uncomfortable. Addison, in speaking of the countless gifts of a Merciful Father says—

> "Nor is the least a grateful heart,
> That tastes those gifts with joy;"

thus well reminding us that joyful gratitude is not simply a duty to be discharged, but a Christian grace to be cultivated. Try, my dear friends, to ENJOY your work, feeling that such enjoyment is partly (I do not say entirely) dependent on yourselves, or rather should I say, dependent on God's blessing, and independent of outward circumstances.

First, however, let us look at one pleasure which is partly dependent: viz. THE ENJOYMENT OF CHRISTIAN INTERCOURSE. No one should enter a Sunday school on purpose to gain this—the good of the children should be the one great object—but this is undeniably a rich blessing by the wayside, softening many a trial, smoothing many a difficulty. Many a friend has it been my privilege to make in the Sunday school, and whatever qualities in them made their friendship pleasant, I have generally found to shine brightest in that work. Many, I am sure, of the purest, noblest, and most useful attachments are formed and hallowed there, for few

mutual engagements can equal the Sunday school work in both fostering and displaying the qualities that gain our affectionate esteem. Far from us be the thought of making the school a mere stepping stone to some desired introduction or connection. Sought in such a spirit, every element of pure success is wanting, and true pleasure will perish under the unhallowed motive; but loving one another with a pure heart, fervently, noting in each other graces to admire and to imitate, and welcoming with open heart and open hand our helpers in God's work, we shall surely find such intercourse a privilege and a pleasure.

Yet some true hearted children of God find this fail them. Some there are, so misunderstood, or so lonely, that the smile and the warm grasp are mere pleasures of imagination. So far as this is their own fault (and such it sometimes is, owing either to the secret or even avowed desire to lift themselves higher in society, by means of the school, or to inconsistency of conduct), the privation must be borne, and meekly accepted as God's discipline to teach those who will learn. But so far as it arises from pride or prejudice in others, or from the mere fact of our lot being cast where there are none to help, then indeed God mercifully compensates by a far higher kind of enjoyment, viz.,

MORE FREQUENT AND CLOSE COMMUNION WITH HIM. The work of teaching, if begun for His sake, leads to continual prayer: and if I dwell but little on the hallowed happiness of this, it is simply because they who have felt it, need no reminding; and they who are strangers to it can only be taught by God Himself. It is enough for me to point out how the study of the Bible, the wish to teach, the difficulties and trials we meet with—all help to bring us more often to the throne of grace, to find that hour the sweetest of the day.

And can I be wrong in counting amongst our pleasures INTERCESSORY PRAYER? If there be delight in working for others, and planning all the good we can for them—if real sympathy finds pleasure in this, how much more in praying for them! Our own heart and hand, and tongue might fail, just when most needed—or might even bring about the very contrary to what we desired; but what a joy to commend these little folks that have gained our affection, to Him whose wisdom can make no mistakes, whose love cannot chill, whose power cannot fail! WE do our utmost, and often in vain,—HE puts out His hand, and they are safe, now and for ever!

Then what a delight to be the means of bringing CHILDREN TO JESUS! Reader, why not look on this as not merely a possibility for others but a probability for you? You surely believe the words

you so often use, when you speak of the Lord Jesus calling little children to Him! You do not suppose that He has lost that desire! No! nor yet that your class are shut out from the blessing. If they may, then, have it, why may not you be the bearer of it? What a flood of sunshine streams down on the toil of teaching, when faith and hope thus smile on it! Oh! seek that pleasure!

Again, in spite of many disappointments, I rank amongst the delights of Sunday school teaching THE SYMPATHY WITH CHILDREN which it naturally produces. There is a freshness about these little people which often touches the heart. They that live much with children, with a kind heart to begin with, find a thousand little ties to bind the FAMILY together; and the Sunday school is but a large family. It is too true that many teachers have but little of this grace—as too clearly shown by their carelessness whether the children come or not, and their readiness to strike the names off the Register without an effort to retain the undecided truant. They little know what they lose! God has placed within their reach a precious source of happiness, and they turn idly away, perhaps to bestow on some imaginary heroine the sympathy they deny to a friendless child yearning for kindness. Turn we to a brighter picture where "Teacher's" smile and nod, or voice, light up the eye and face, and throw a halo around the Sunday school; and friendship, without any undue familiarity, cheers the young spirit that may, perhaps, have but too little of such kindness at home. And when years have rolled by, and life has opened out, or even come to its close, how many a teacher has had the priceless pleasure of grateful affection from an old scholar! How many a redeemed spirit, hovering on the brink of eternity, has acknowledged, from its deepest affections, the services rendered by the teacher! Perhaps no earthly pleasure from without can surpass this.

And, in conclusion, may I lift the veil of the future? The pleasures of the Sunday school are not only the present enjoyments, but the hopes and expectations that await fulfilment from Him whose word cannot be broken. It was no merely human tongue that uttered in anticipation the familiar words, "well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." HIS JOY! when He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied. The true follower of the lowly Saviour will never indulge in proud feelings of earning such a reward; but when we know, from His own lips, how freely and how undeservedly He will then bless the hearts and hands that have toiled though so feebly for Him, then, indeed, that hope, full of immortality, will crown our work with a pleasure beyond aught that earth alone can give. May we all drink freely of such a stream of life!

E. G. F.

"YET NOT I."

GAL. II. 20.

"YET not I"—shall be my motto here,
Sounding like music ever in mine ear;
So would I call to mind my nothingness,
And my Redeemer's spotless righteousness.

"Yet not I"—yes, that shall be my aim,
To magnify the Saviour's glorious name;
And while I labour for him here below,
Nothing but Jesus crucified to know.

"Yet not I"—'tis Christ that works in me;
My soul was bound, but He has set it free;
Yes—it was dead in trespasses and sin,
But He has put a living soul within.

"Yet not I"—'tis Christ that lives in me—
Oh may this truth beget humility!
With Christ I'm crucified—to sin I die,
Therefore, sweet thought, I live, and "yet not I."

"Yet not I"—'tis Christ that works by me,
To rescue souls (unworthy though I be);
'Tis He who makes the seed to take deep root,
And to His praise spring up and yield good fruit.

"Yet not I"—away with glory, then;
My Saviour's praise I yet will sound again;
Content on earth to fill the lowest place,
If He would magnify in me His grace.

"Yet not I"—methinks the saints above
Will use this motto as they praise His love;
While they exultingly His grace proclaim,
And own the sweetness of His saving name.

"Yet not I"—oh may this motto be
Engraven on my heart, dear Lord, by Thee!
Feeling my weakness ever more and more,
May I rejoice in Thy all-quickening power!

J. J. M.

PROSPERITY AND ADVERSITY—"Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament; adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction, and the clearer revelation of God's favour. Yet even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp, you shall hear as many hearse-like airs as carols—and the pencils of the Holy Ghost have laboured more in describing the afflictions of Job, than the felicities of Solomon."—*Bacon.*

SELF-DENIAL.

In order to gain a correct idea of this lofty virtue, it is necessary to establish clearly the fact, that the only self-denial of which God approves is the successful struggle of the "right spirit" (Ps. li. 10) against the desires of the flesh, when those desires are contrary to God's laws. It is because Satan, our depraved nature, and surrounding circumstances are constantly "warring" against the right spirit that self-denial has continually to be exercised.

The whole life of our great Redeemer, from His birth to His grave, was one continual act of self-denial. Christ's agony in the garden of Gethsemane is enough to prove how exceedingly His human nature revolted from the proffered bitter cup; but it could not pass away—what then? He prayed, and God sent strength to endure it; still, although he was wholly submissive to the Father's will, the crushing affliction of imputed sin was overwhelming the pure and spotless Jesus, and we read that, "being in an agony, he prayed *more earnestly*." Thus ended the mighty struggle, and the Lord went forth, unflinchingly, to bear the burden of the guilt of the whole world.

Some little time before, while He was foretelling His sufferings and victory, He proclaimed how all might be partakers of the salvation so dearly to be won. "If any man will come after Me, let him *deny himself*, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke ix. 23). From this injunction great errors have arisen, especially in Roman Catholic countries, where the light of truth is cruelly hidden from the people. Protestants read, with horror, of the tortures the zealous ignorant inflict upon themselves, supposing to expiate their sins by ways both dishonouring to God and unproductive of peace to their own souls. They are in darkness, not discerning the mercy and goodness of Jehovah in having supplied in Christ perfect satisfaction for all sin. "Jesus Christ, the righteous; He is the propitiation for our sins." (1 John ii. 1, 2.) Let us not suppose that any puny sacrifice of ours could add to the sufficiency of that once made, for, on the contrary, the presumption, ignorance, or want of faith, which prompts the addition, loosens our claim on the free gift of salvation offered through Christ Jesus.

Having realised that no part of the work of redemption is left for ourselves to perform, where, then, is the necessity for self-denial? God's Word is clear; let us seek to have a right understanding of it. In the time of the seven years' famine, which extended into the land where Jacob dwelt, the cry for bread was answered by the word, "there is corn in Egypt." So the sons of Jacob saddled their

asses, and proceeded to that country. The quiet shepherds did not hesitate to leave their peaceful home, their wives, and their little ones; neither did they linger on the road, nor turn aside to go elsewhere; for food they desired, and in Egypt it awaited them. In a like manner, for those that earnestly desire to be saved, salvation awaits them, but they must go to accept it at the Saviour's hands, all that would deter them must be disregarded. It is thus that self-denial must be exercised.

A caged linnet was one day perched, with drooping wings, in his tiny prison, pining for liberty, when a little child, pitying it, opened the cage door to set it free; but the foolish bird, after looking out doubtingly on the bright world, turned back to peck again at its food. The owner at this moment came in and closed the cage, making the silly bird prisoner for life; had it denied itself a moment's indulgence, it would have been free. The little child sought to be its liberator, but it turned from the intended benefit, and the opportunity was lost for ever. *We* resemble this bird. Christ has opened to us the door of salvation, but He does not force us to pass through; it must be by our own free will. The gift of life is held out to us, but we must stretch out the hands of faith and love to grasp it; if we do not believe in it, we shall not seek it; if we do not love and desire it above all things, we shall turn back, like the bird, to seek happiness in the transient joys of our prison. Therefore, we see, that although self-denial cannot itself save us, it is needed to prevent the desires of this world from impeding our progress in the way of eternal life. St. Paul says, "*I keep under my body*, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. ix. 27).

From the hour in which Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, mankind became endued with the (then coveted) knowledge of good and evil, and ever since the inclination of man's fallen nature has continually been to do evil. St. Paul felt this when he wrote to the Romans in the following self-accusing words:—"When I would do good, evil is present with me;" and "the good I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Rom. vii. 19, 21). Hence our Lord's injunction, "Let him deny himself." Deny himself what?—food or raiment befitting the position of life in which he is placed? Not so, for Jesus tells us how God feeds the ravens, and with what beautiful attire He clothes the flowers of the field, to which He adds, "Are ye not much better than they? and shall He not much more clothe you? Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." By this we are taught that God does not intend us to deny ourselves the needful comforts

which He provides. Christ only warns His followers not to attend to the concerns of their perishing bodies as though they were of *paramount* importance.

That we may really desire to belong to Christ, humble ourselves in prayer before God, and appear to be living as Christ's true disciples, and yet *not* be His, we find distinctly proved by the following account:—An ardent seeker after the truth (St. Luke describes him as "a certain ruler") once asked our Lord what he should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus reminded him of all the commandments in which the duty to one's neighbour is specified. The young man promptly replied, that those he had kept from his youth. This was true; his conduct had been blameless before men; and we read that the gentle Saviour, beholding him, loved him; but He saw what mortal eyes could not see, that the young ruler's heart was not wholly given to God, and He pointed out his worldly possessions as the hindrance. "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up thy cross, and follow Me." This almost perfect young man could not stand the test, but went away sorrowful; for he loved his riches more than God, and would not deny himself the present gratification they afforded him; so they remained as before, the one great barrier which shut out from him the way to heaven.

This and many other portions of Holy Scripture teach us that the self-denial required of Christians is simply to relinquish whatever hinders them from walking in the narrow road which leads to the kingdom prepared for them. Jesus says, "I am the Way;" but He tells us that should anything, as precious as a right eye or hand, cause us to stumble or err from that Way, it must be given up, yea, and willingly; we must our own selves, if need be, "cut it off," "pluck it out," and "cast it from us."

Dear friends, the message to each of us individually is, "Let him deny himself, and take up *his cross* daily,"—*his* cross, that is to say, the one that God has allotted us, and not one that we are to make for ourselves, or for one another, as the Romanists do. These words may meet the eye of one whose especial cross is to bear reproach or ridicule, on account of his or her connection with the Sunday school; let such an one be very watchful, lest Satan tempt him to lay down his cross, to be ashamed of serving Christ. Fellow-teacher, the writer of these pages is not ignorant of the burden of a cross like that given to you to bear, therefore it is with great earnestness she bids you deny yourself the wish to appear above the humble position of a Sunday school teacher. Oh! resist the temptation to declare that you only teach *because you are fond of children*,

or *because you have nothing else to do*, and do not be drawn away to join in the laugh at more consistent Christians than yourself, in order to save yourself from bearing the same reproach. St. Peter writes, in the fourteenth verse of the fourth chapter of his first Epistle, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."

Perhaps, thoughtful reader, you are one zealous for Christ, and desirous to win souls for Him, and yet to whom the task of teaching a set of fidgetty children is not only uninteresting, but wearisome, from the knowledge that you fail to gain any personal influence over them; that, indeed, you are aware that some even laugh behind your back at your earnest manner. Deny yourself, take up this your cross, remembering that truth spoken may fall upon apparently unheeding ears, but God, for whom you labour, and to whom you so often pray, with a sorrowful heart, will Himself bring forward the Word in His own good time. James v. 7, &c., contains one of God's messages of comfort to you.

Again, these pages may come under the notice of one of God's people, to whom some heavy affliction has been sent. The angel of death has, perchance, removed from this troubled world a cherished object of tender love; or, it may be, that illness has deprived the cheek of health, the eye of brightness, giving to the poor worn frame sad tokens of the frailty of all human strength. Fellow-Christian, "whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth;" therefore, be not tempted to "despise the Lord," nor to "faint (*i.e.*, lose courage, doubt His goodness) when thou art rebuked of Him." Take up thy cross—it is too heavy for thee to bear alone—take it to Jesus, He will comfort and assist thee; therefore be not cast down, but subdue the murmurings that seek to take up their abode in thine heart. Hide not thyself to indulge in grief, but let the world see that affliction has brought thee nearer to thy Saviour, and that He enables thee to say, with the prophet Habakkuk, "Although all earthly things that I delight in may fail, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation: the Lord God is my strength."

And how does this power of self-denial become possible? St. Paul, in the eighth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, completely solves this difficulty; at the eighteenth verse, he certifies that "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Further on, he speaks of hope and faith bringing patience, and of the powerful aid of the Holy Spirit, especially in prayerful wrestlings; and then, after bringing forward convincing arguments that "all things work together for good to them that love God," the inspired Apostle

breaks forth into what might well be called the triumphant shout of Christ's Church militant—"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecutions, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Rana.

HUMAN AND DIVINE TESTIMONY.

We are living in times of perplexity and questioning as to the truth of that religion which generation after generation has been taught to receive as Divine, and upon which men have been urged to rest their hopes for eternity. One of its earliest teachers, a convert to its truth in spite of himself, has exhorted us to put it to the proof, and to assure ourselves of the reality of those things in which we believe. Another, a loving follower of the Lord from the first call he received, has told us of another mode by which we may establish ourselves in our belief. St. John says (1 John v. 9), "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God, which He hath testified of His Son."

There are two kinds of testimony, then, to the truth of the Christian religion—human testimony, "the witness of men;" and Divine testimony, "the witness of God." Let us look at both of these.

Our education by Christian parents or teachers is the first and earliest witness we receive from men respecting religion, and of all others this is the one which makes the deepest and most lasting impression upon us. The mother who teaches her child the Lord's Prayer, and helps the young heart to lift itself up to its Father in heaven, has done more to convince that child of the existence of God than the most learned of scientific teachers could accomplish. Added to this primary teaching, even though it be general and imperfect, is that kind of testimony which the general concurrence of those with whom we are connected in social intercourse, presents to us in confirmation of our belief. Hence the blessing of being born in a Christian land and of religious parents, for by this means God brings home to us, almost irresistibly, the truths which otherwise it might

require peculiar force of evidence to enable us to embrace. As a general rule, the young are not usually disposed to question the truth of that which is commonly accepted by their parents and associates, and hence, in most cases, this "witness of men" is sufficient to induce them to adopt the faith of their fathers.

But if we wish to "prove all things" for ourselves, then we must proceed to examine the grounds of our faith, and to determine the weight of the evidence upon which it rests. In the New Testament we see the truth of Christianity made to depend upon the fact of Christ's *resurrection*, after suffering death on the cross, and lying in the grave. Of this fact the best evidence exists; but, if no other than that of the Apostles were to be found, that alone would be sufficient—for what advantage could it be to them, if they knew Jesus to be an impostor (as He must have been, if, after His repeated declarations that He would rise again, He did not do so), to adhere to a belief in Him, which only involved them in shame and suffering, and which could bring them neither advantage in this life, nor reward in that which is to come? We know that they, and multitudes of others, living at that time, were convinced of the truth of our Lord's resurrection, and we think their testimony the most conclusive "witness of men" which we can obtain. That fact established, all other evidence is of secondary value—for by it all that Christ said and did received a higher sanction and approval than any human testimony could render.

"The witness of God is greater;" and it is this which it should be our great concern to obtain. In Apostolic times, God gave mighty testimony to His Son by the Divine power He bestowed upon Him in the days of His humiliation upon earth, in His conquest over the grave, in the power which accompanied the preaching of His Apostles, and the wonders done in His name. All these spoke, as the voice from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." These miraculous demonstrations, however, have ceased; but a Divine witness is still given, though of a different character. "He that doeth His will shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God;" and all who receive the truth "in the love of it," receive a spiritual proof of the reality of that which they believe, communicated to the hearts of believers by the Holy Ghost, by which all human testimony is strengthened and confirmed. Many obtain the human testimony, but stagger and perplex themselves at every fresh difficulty, because they have not felt the power of the truth in their souls. This alone makes the Gospel the means of salvation. The man who has this testimony "has the witness in himself;" he *knows* in whom he has believed, he *feels* the certainty of what the Divine Spirit has taught him,

and its best evidence is the power which his faith exercises over his whole being.

In times of doubt and controversy, such as those which have now come, let us seek chiefly for this "witness of God," for it is greater and better than the most learned and most convincing "witness of men."

W. S.

ONE BY ONE.

One by one the sands are flowing,
  One by one the moments fall;
Some are coming, some are going,
  Do not strive to grasp them all.

One by one thy duties wait thee,
  Let thy whole strength go to each,
Let no future dreams elate thee,
  Learn thou first what these can teach.

One by one (bright gifts from heaven)
  Joys are sent thee here below;
Take them readily when given,
  Ready be to let them go.

One by one thy griefs shall meet thee,
  Do not fear an armed band;
One will fade as others greet thee,
  Shadows passing through the land.

Do not look at Life's long sorrow;
  See how small each moment's pain:
God will help thee for to-morrow,
  So each day begin again.

Every hour that fleets so slowly
  Has its task to do or bear;
Luminous the crown, and holy
  When each gem is set with care.

Do not linger with regretting,
  Or for passing hours despond;
Nor, the daily toil forgetting,
  Look too eagerly beyond.

Hours are golden links, God's token,
  Reaching heaven; but one by one
Take them, lest the chain be broken
  Ere the pilgrimage be done.

From "Willmott's English Sacred Poetry."

"MORE TEACHERS."

"We want more teachers" is sounded from so many Sunday schools, both in town and country, that it is worth while to consider the cause of such a deficiency of labourers in this part of the Lord's vineyard, and if possible to discover the means of removing it. Nor does the subject lose its interest to those who are already engaged in the good work; for what teacher is there who has not found his own quiet disturbed, his usefulness almost destroyed for the time, and his energies taxed to the uttermost, by finding his class occasionally doubled for want of "more teachers?"

The difficulty is principally found to exist in our boys' schools. Although we sometimes hear the same complaint in girls' schools, it is comparatively rare, for young ladies, and earnest loving Christian women of every grade of society, seem to be ready to gather round them the little wanderers of the neighbourhood in which they reside, and to endeavour to guide them to the fold of the good Shepherd, that He may bless them, and guide them in the way everlasting. It is not so, however, in our boys' schools. There we shall often find the Superintendent perplexed to know what to do with new scholars, for the classes are already too full, and many of them taught by elder pupils, who, however zealous and useful (and we certainly could not do without them) often lack that amount of knowledge which is needful to fit them to be teachers of boys so quick and shrewd as those we meet with, in London especially, between the ages of twelve and sixteen.

Our clergy are not insensible to the difficulty of conducting a Sunday school efficiently without an adequate number of qualified teachers; but, although as we look round upon our congregations, we cannot help feeling that there are many who could take part with us, it is proved by experience that they rarely make the offer to do so unless personally applied to for their assistance. After Confirmation, it often happens that a few additions are made to the staff of teachers from the newly confirmed members of the Church, who, in the deep solemnity of that renewal of the baptismal vow, are anxious to enter upon some portion of the work of the Lord, and find in this field of usefulness the most ready means of devoting their youthful energies to the task of making known the truth to those who are still ignorant of it. Inexperience and self-distrust, or perhaps inability to maintain discipline in a class, to gain attention, or to impart instruction (for these are not naturally possessed by all, but have to be acquired and cultivated) may, however, sadly damp this zealous purpose; and, while some go on for years, heartily enjoying the work, the majority

fall away, after a few months or years, and are seen no more in the Sunday school.

But it is evident that no institution can be in a sound and healthy state which is not supported and directed by those of long-tried experience. New teachers are always welcome and necessary, to fill up the ranks which are thinned continually by changes neither to be foreseen nor avoided. But the stability of a school consists greatly in possessing a certain number of teachers of proved experience,—who have studied the character of children, who can command obedience, secure attention, and impart the kind of instruction adapted to the capacities of young people already acquainted with the elements of Bible knowledge, but who have to be led onwards to deeper experimental acquaintance with the things of God, and to the understanding of higher mysteries. As we look around us in our school-rooms, why is it that there are so few beyond the very early days of manhood to be found among the teachers? Why so rarely any middle-aged or old men to be found there? The answers I have often heard given to this inquiry are, that the occupations of daily life become more laborious as years roll on; that the duty of bringing up their families requires the presence of parents at home; and that as men advance in years they need more the rest which the quiet hours of the Sabbath were, undoubtedly, designed to afford both to body and mind.

There is much of reason and truth in these explanations; but on the other hand, is it not the fact that those who are inclined to be useful to their fellow creatures, or desire to do something to advance the Saviour's kingdom, are found working indefatigably in other parts of the vineyard up to their old age, notwithstanding the obligation of family ties, and the wearying influence of worldly cares and occupations? And, indeed, the Sunday school is not without its own exceptions to the evil which we are now considering. It *does* number among the large company of teachers men of high rank and position in society,—the titled noble, the ancient baronet, the wealthy gentry, the judge, the councillor, the member of parliament, representatives of the learned professions, medical men and lawyers, officers of the army and navy, and a large company from the middle classes of society,—but not in *the proportion* which we think it ought to receive, considering the nature and importance of the work itself, and the qualifications required of those who engage in it.

All honour to those in less favourable positions in life, who take so large a part in the work of the Sunday school, who labour with their hands from morning till night for six days in the week, and devote their only day of rest to informing the ignorant children of the poor about the loving Saviour, who died that they might live

eternally! All honour to those who, toiling in shops or offices during the whole week, have little leisure for study or for enlarging their own store of knowledge, but are ready to tell what they know, of the Divine love and mercy to the little ones whom they desire to lead to Jesus! All honour to those elder scholars who, having long listened to the Divine Word themselves, come afterwards to share their teachers' work, and to make known what they have heard to others! These all are doing the Lord's work, are faithful labourers in His vineyard, and, according to the talents entrusted to them, will receive a corresponding reward for their patient, faithful, persevering efforts.

But are there not others, who have *more* time at their own disposal, *more* knowledge and experience, *more* advantages and opportunities, who ought also to be fellow-workers with these brethren of the Lord? We see young men in our Sunday assemblies in the Church so earnest and devout that we cannot think them indifferent to the duty of spreading the gospel throughout the world, or of their own responsiblility individually to do something for Christ their Saviour. In the Sunday school the harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few: work has to be done, but those who might do it stand without all the day idle.

Why are they absent? Is it because they think that it would be beneath their social position to mingle, even in Christian labour, in the company of those in a humbler walk of life, and that they would thereby forfeit the respect due to their own families and associates? We have already said that, here and there, we *have* those amongst us of the highest social position, and we can assure those who may thus think, that they will rarely find a want of the respect which is due to the position in which God has placed them in those who have learnt in the Gospel to "render to all their due:" and that among true Christian workers, even in the humblest paths of life, they will see graces shining so brightly as to make them thankful that they have been brought in contact with them. Or, is it that the work of the Sunday school teacher is supposed to be beneath the capacities of the well-educated, and so simple that it needs no high mental qualification for its exercise? Here also a great mistake is made, as all know who endeavour to expound a familiar passage of Scripture, so as to bring it within the comprehension of children. The well-informed Bible student will find it a useful mental exercise, so to analyse a well-known chapter as to be able to answer the questions as to its meaning which a quick class of boys will put to their teacher, and so to explain it that its main truths may be clearly brought out. Or is it simply that the labour is irksome and toilsome, and is, therefore, avoided? Alas! we fear this is the most frequent cause why so

many neglect to engage in Sunday school teaching. They consult their own ease and comfort, and they know that these must be sacrificed for a few hours at all events, if they undertake Sunday by Sunday to take charge of some eight or ten boys, perhaps troublesome to manage, inattentive or thoughtless, and that it will require some self-denial, in all weather, and whatever their personal engagements may be, faithfully to pursue the work of endeavouring to lead the young children committed to their care to a knowledge of God, and to train them up in His fear and love.

Are such excuses deserving of Christian young men? Ought we not, one and all, high or low, to do our Lord's work, wherever, and in whatever way it is open to us? "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto *the least* of these *My* brethren, ye did it not to Me," are the Saviour's own words. The time has passed, we hope for ever, when it was supposed to be the duty of the clergy exclusively to speak of religion to their fellow-men; but the time has yet to come when the laity will take their proper share in the work of the Christian Church, and do as much as they are able to do to strengthen the hands of their pastors. "No man liveth to himself" who is a Christian indeed, and those who feel how great their own debt is to Him who gave Himself for them, will be ready to do what they can in whatever field of labour He may assign them. No more direct, no simpler, and no happier way can be found for speaking of His love, and of winning souls for Him, than in teaching the young what great things He has done for them. Children attend eagerly to the touching story of the Saviour's life; they listen wonderingly to His mighty deeds; they catch the meaning and feel the power of His pointed words; and their young hearts are ready to give Him a place in their best affections. Nor need any fancy that his mind is too highly cultivated for such a task. Never did a Christian teacher sit down to speak to the youngest child of the things of God in a faithful spirit without finding his own mind illumined by fresh glimpses of the light of divine truth, and its reality and power brought home with greater force and comfort to his own soul. "High and low one with another" we assemble together in the great congregation to offer prayer and praise to "our Father which is in heaven;" and so, in the communion of saints ought we to meet as fellow-workers for Christ on earth, if we expect to realize the blessedness of the communion of the glorified servants of the Lord in His kingdom in heaven.

But this Magazine, will perhaps never be read by any but Sunday school teachers and those interested in their work. Can these do anything to obtain helpers such as I have described? It might perhaps have greater weight if the clergy would personally commend this branch of Christian labour to those educated young men in their

churches whose lives give them reason to believe that their hearts are turned to God in sincerity,—for no mere intellectual qualifications avail in this case, unless accompanied by the indwelling of the Divine Spirit, and a faithful devotion to the Saviour. But do we not all know, in our own circles of acquaintance, or in our congregations some whom *we* might enlist into our Master's service? When the army of the sovereign needs to be increased, soldiers are scattered throughout the country to obtain recruits, and it would never do to wait till enough volunteers come forward unasked to join the ranks. So in the army of the King of Kings, those who are already the soldiers of the cross should win others to fight under the same heavenly banner against the tide of evil and ignorance in the midst of which they live; and those who have themselves served under the Captain of our salvation are best able to tell how good and gracious a Lord and Master He is, and how blessed are all who enter that service which is "perfect freedom." Thus we may be able to add to the number of our fellow-workers, and so to remove the disconsolate cry so often heard in our Sunday schools, of the need for "more teachers."

M. S.

DISCONTENT.

"Some murmur when their sky is clear,
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue.
And some with thankful love are filled,
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's good mercy, gild
The darkness of their night.

"In palaces are hearts that ask,
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task,
And all good things denied?
And hearts in poorest huts admire
How love has in their aid
(Love that not ever seems to tire)
Such rich provision made."

Dean Trench.

The Teacher in his Study.

ON THE STUDY OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

II.

No one will fully appreciate the great advantages arising from our having not one, but four narratives of the Saviour's life, who does not place them carefully in contrast as to design, method, and style. Each Evangelist evidently had his own peculiar purpose in writing, and this is found, in each case, to govern, in a great measure, the selection of the matter introduced. The language and style of each are further influenced by the individual character of his own mind. Each, again, would seem to have had sources of information distinct from those possessed by all in common. The result is, that by combining the aspects of our Lord's life, character, and teaching, presented by each, we are enabled more fully to comprehend the perfection of His life, the unity of His character, the supreme excellence of His teaching. This combined view I shall examine in my next paper, but the separate purpose and style of each Gospel I take first, as falling properly under my first division, the study of the four distinct records. It would be impossible in the space I can allot to this subject to go through all the steps of the investigation, and I therefore content myself with endeavouring to present the conclusions to which they lead, in the form of a historical account of the successive composition of the four Gospels, adopting the supplemental theory of their origin already referred to. I do not, of course, submit this sketch as certainly true, but as embodying what I believe to be the most probable and natural views; I state or imply nothing for which I cannot adduce good evidence; and in respect of the design and tone of thought which I attribute to each Gospel, I have the concurrence of almost all the chief expositors.

During the first twelve years after the Ascension, while the preaching of the new faith was confined to Palestine, where the twelve still remained together, engaged continually in orally instructing the infant Church, the want of a written narrative of the Lord's life would not be felt. But when the conversion of Cornelius opened the eyes of the Apostles to the calling of the Gentiles, and the persecution under the third Herod drove them from Judæa, the need of such an account would at once arise. At this juncture, then, and before the death of Herod led to the reappointment of a Roman governor (a point to which I have already

referred), I conceive that the Spirit of God moved St. Matthew to write his Gospel. And for whom? For those whom alone Christianity had yet reached—the Jewish people. And with what especial design? Not merely to supply the required authoritative record, but to avail of this felt need, more entirely to satisfy the believing, and more forcibly persuade the unbelieving Jews of the great truth that Jesus of Nazareth was, indeed, the Messiah King of the ancient Hebrew prophets. It is evident that this idea pervaded St. Matthew's thoughts while composing the first Gospel. He almost always describes the new dispensation by the term "kingdom of heaven," which is used by him twenty-nine times, and never by the other Evangelists. He represents John the Baptist proclaiming the approach of this kingdom (chap. iii. 3); and Jesus Himself as repeating the proclamation (chap. iv. 17); as giving the twelve the same commission (chap. x. 7); as declaring the blessedness of the kingdom, and the qualifications for attaining it (chap. v. 1—20; vii. 21; viii. 11, 12; xviii. 1—3); as describing the economy of its development in parables (chaps. xiii., xx., xxii., xxv.). In the discourses and parables which he selects to enrich his work, we observe continually a royal and authoritative character, until the whole is wound up with the Lord's proclamation of His supreme dominion—"All power is given unto Me in heaven and earth; go ye, *therefore*, and teach all nations." His constant aim is to identify the incidents of the life of Jesus with the predictions of the Old Testament, reminding his Hebrew readers of Isaiah's prophecies of the Virgin bearing a Son, the preparatory voice crying in the wilderness, the great light to shine on the people sitting in the moral darkness of Galilee, the Healer of human infirmities and sicknesses, the tenderness of Him who should not break the bruised reed; of Jeremiah's prediction, too, of the weeping in Rama; Hosea's, of the sojourn in Egypt; Micah's, of the birth at Bethlehem;* and of the fulfilment by Jesus of the many mysterious intimations which he sums up in the words, "He shall be called a Nazarene." † And I may observe,

* See Matt. i. 22, 23, compared with Is. ix. 6; chap. iii. 3, with Is. xl. 3—6; chap. iv. 14, 16, with Is. ix. 1, 2; chap. viii. 17, with Is. liii. 4; chap. xii. 17—21, with Is. xlii. 1—4; chap. ii. 5, 6, 15, 17, 18, with Micah v. 2; Hosea xi. 1; Jer. xxxi. 15. See also chaps. xi. 10; xiii. 14, 15, 35; xxi. 42; xxvii. 9, 10, 35; compared with Is. xl. 3; vi. 9, 10; Ps. lxxviii. 2; xlix. 4; cxviii. 22, 23; Zech. xi. 12, 13; Ps. xxii. 18.

† These words probably refer (1) to all the prophecies which give Messiah the title of the *Branch* (Heb. *nasa) of the root of Jesse* (Is. xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 5; Zech. vi. 11); (2) to the passages in which the obscurity of Messiah's apparent origin and His contemptuous rejection are predicted (Ps. xxii. 6; lxix. 7, 12; Is. xlix. 7; liii. 2, 3, compared with John i. 46; vii. 52). Ellicott, *Hulsean Lect.*, p. 81, note; Webster and Wilkinson, *Greek Test.*, *in loco*.

in passing, that the character of some of these quotations, which the Evangelist would certainly not have introduced, if they had not been *accepted among the people as Messianic*, may teach us that the Jews, blinded as they were, had a keener insight into the scope of Old Testament prophecy than some of our "enlightened" modern divines.

Mindful, too, that the very language of an appeal to the Hebrew mind would require care, he opens in the old style of Genesis and Chronicles—"The book of the generations of Jesus Christ, the Son of David," &c.; proceeds to give the royal lineage through which, by the adoption of Joseph, Jesus would have a legal as well as a natural claim to the inheritance of David, but carries the pedigree no further back than to Abraham, the great father of the nation; and, while writing (as is now considered certain*) in Greek, he encourages rather than represses the natural flow of Hebraistic thought and diction. Although the bias of his professional mind, and the memory of his despised position when a publican, lead him to relate with especial frequency and fulness such acts and words of our Lord as were most antagonistic to Phariseeism,† yet he is careful to represent Jesus not as an innovator, but as a rebuker of innovations, as one who came "not to destroy, but to fulfil the law and the prophets."

An exact chronological life of Christ being quite superfluous in that early age, Matthew keeps the order of events subordinate to his main design, grouping them rather in their moral than their historical relation.‡

Let us now suppose that six years have elapsed since Matthew wrote. The Church is in a transition state. While Paul and Barnabas are gladdening the Phrygians and Cilicians with the words of eternal life, Jewish exclusiveness and legality still influence, to some extent, the older Apostles,—even Peter, after having baptized the first Roman converts at Cæsarea, deferring to the scruples of those less liberal. One of his sons in the faith, John Mark, probably affected by a like prejudice, declines to push into Asia Minor with the Apostle of the Gentiles, and returns home to Jerusalem. Perhaps while visiting, in company with Peter, the newly planted Church at Cæsarea, he is prompted, by the Divine Teacher, to write for the sturdy Roman soldiers quartered there, a narrative of their Saviour's life, specially adapted to them as men of action, and wor-

* See Alford, *Gr. Test.* (2nd Edition), vol. i., *Prolegomena*, chap. ii. § 2.

† See Matt. v. 20—44; vi. 1—18; ix. 10—13; xii. 3—8, 11—13, 25—45; xv. 1—20; xvi. 5—12; xix. 3—9; xxi. 28—32; xxiii. 1—33.

‡ See Birks, *Horæ Evang.*, book i., chap. i. § 2.

shippers naturally of power and strength. Thus, as the Apostle of the circumcision had been privileged to baptize, so the deserter from missionary work is privileged to instruct, the first converts from Paganism.

Taking the already acknowledged Gospel of Matthew as a basis, while restoring the true order of events,* and availing himself of his intimacy with Peter to enrich his work with the latter's vivid recollections of the sacred scenes in Galilee he desired to describe, Mark girds himself to his task. There would be no object in exhibiting to Romans the Messiah-king of the despised Jews; he therefore, omits all reference to the lineage of Jesus, and the connection of His life with Old Testament prophecy. He would rather show, by the majesty of the Saviour's mighty works, (as his opening words imply,) that that same Jesus Christ was "the Son of God." Accordingly, the Cæsar of the Evangelists, as he has been aptly called,† introduces few of the discourses and parables of which Matthew had so largely availed himself, but plunges in the very first chapter into the midst of the Lord's active ministry, relating miracle after miracle in a swift, spirit-stirring series, interrupted only by the frequent notice of the spectators "fearing exceedingly," or being "beyond measure astonished,"‡ while the ever-recurring word *εὐθέως* (*straightway* or *immediately*), which we find in this Gospel three times as often as in all the others put together, seems to impart a vigour and rapidity to the narrative exactly suited to the tastes of the intended readers.

With vivid fulness and reality, too, is every scene described, though often in a very limited space. Thus he alone of the Evangelists gives us a glimpse of the *wild beasts* in whose company the hungering Saviour abode in the wilderness, the *pillow* on which he lay in the ship, the *ranks* in which the five thousand were arranged, the *green grass* they sat on. Only in this Gospel do we see Jesus so often *looking round about* upon men and things, walking *in front* of the disciples, *heaving sighs* at the miseries or sins of men; and hear the exact words He used in the original language, *Boanerges*, *Ephphatha*, *Abba*, *Talitha Cumi*. And if these and numerous other details, though derived from the Divinely-quickened memory of Peter, show us that Mark himself loved, as Ellicott says, "the objective and circumstantial," they also evince his care to enchain

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* See Birks, *Hor. Evang.*, Book ii. chap. iv.

† British Quarterly Review, Jan., 1862, Art. *The Fourfold Record.*

‡ See Mark i. 22, 27, 45; ii. 2, 12; iii. 9, 20; iv. 41; v. 20, 43; vi. 2, 31, 33, 51, 54—56; vii. 36, 37; ix. 15; x. 26, 32; xi. 18; xii. 17.

by his graphic pictures the restless minds of the impetuous Romans.*

Nor does he forget that they are likely to be ignorant of many Jewish customs and expressions, adding such explanations as "the first day of unleavened bread, *when they killed the Passover*," "Corban, *that is to say, a gift*," &c.; while the comparatively familiar references to the *localities* of Palestine are evidently addressed to men who know the country; and this latter characteristic confirms the opinion that the tradition (preserved by Irenæus) that Mark wrote at Rome is unreliable, though easily accounted for by the very probable removal of some of the troops thither, who would introduce there this Gospel before Matthew's had been borne so far.†

It is necessary to observe here that St. Mark's Gospel appears to close abruptly at the ninth verse of the last chapter. The remaining eleven verses are so different in style, that the Evangelist probably added them some years later to complete the narrative which may have been suddenly broken off by one of many possible events. This would explain his concluding words, "they went forth and preached everywhere," which would scarcely be correct at the date I have assigned for the original composition of the Gospel.

We must now again carry our thoughts onward three or four years, to A.D. 51 or 52. The Gentile converts throughout Western Asia, and probably Egypt, are now numbered by thousands, and have also received their just status in the Church by the decree of the Council of Jerusalem. With all the ardour of men brought from such darkness into such light, they naturally have the keenest interest in the life of their Redeemer, and consequently many, as we learn from St. Luke's preface to his Gospel, "take in hand to set in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among them." This would be especially the case at Antioch, the political and commercial capital of the East, and the centre of the Church's missionary operations. Here we must probably place the residence of that "most excellent Theophilus,"‡ to whom the Greek physician Luke, prompted from above to compile a new life of Christ suited

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* Compare especially the incidents recorded in ch. i., the voyage to Gadara, the cure of the demoniacs (ch. v. and ix.), the raising of Jairus' daughter, with the parallel accounts in Matt. and Luke. Graphic expressions occur continually; and Ellicott (Huls. Lect., pp. 24, 25, notes) gives instances of the use of peculiarly forcible Greek words and phrases.

† See Birks, *Hor. Evang.*, Book ii., chap. iv., § 7.

‡ Birks addaces numerous evidences from the language of the Acts, which tend to fix the residence of Theophilus at Antioch, rather than (as has generally been considered) in Italy. *Hor. Evang.* Book ii., Chap. ii.

to the Gentile Churches and authorized to supersede the defective narratives now circulating among them, addresses his Gospel.

The diligence of Luke in collecting such information as should render his work more regular and complete than those of his predecessors, is very apparent in the study of its contents. He compares the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, adopts the correct order of events given by the latter, and adds some notes of time which, after the lapse of centuries, hold an important place in the historical evidences of Christianity.* He obtains (as is probable †) from the now aged mother of Jesus a written account of the events preceding and accompanying the birth of her Divine Son, which he weaves into his narrative. He receives, doubtless from the Apostles, much important matter not yet published, particularly respecting the Lord's discourses during the six months after His final departure from Galilee.‡ He travels (as I think likely) into Judea, and hears from many witnesses accounts of the scenes enacted there, which enable him to relate particulars not easily gathered from the regular sources; as, for instance, the anxiety of Zaccheus to see Jesus, and his climbing the tree. From Manaen, the foster-brother of Herod Antipas, who is resident in Antioch, and a Christian teacher, he obtains those notices of Herod and his family which are peculiar to his Gospel.§ But though so zealous a collector of facts as to warrant his assertion that he had "perfect understanding of all things from the very first," he judiciously selects from the mass such few as will be best fitted for the instruction of the rising Gentile Churches, mindful that a bulky manuscript would not be generally useful.

And what aspect of the Saviour's work and character does the beloved Physician present to His wide and ever-widening circle of readers of all countries? Matthew had told the Jews of the true King of Israel; Mark had amazed the Roman troops with his picture of the mighty Son of God; Luke will draw the sympathising Saviour identifying himself with human interests, and calling all men to himself. He will exhibit Jesus condescending to experience the helplessness of infancy, and the gradual development of childhood and youth; blessing those whom others would but curse,—the "woman that was a sinner," the bigoted villagers of Samaria, the ten lepers, Zaccheus the publican, the dying thief; preaching the universality

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* Luke i. 5, ii. 1, 2, iii. 1, 2, 23.

† See Alford, *Greek Test.*, Vol. i.; *Prolegomena*, Chap. iv, § 8.

‡ The larger portion of St. Luke's Gospel, contained in Chap. x.—xviii., belongs to this period, and has scarcely any parallel passages in the other Gospels.

§ Luke viii. 1; ix. 7; xiii. 1, 31; xxiii. 6; also Acts xii.

of God's love in his sermon at Nazareth, and in such parables as the Prodigal Son, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Piece of Silver, the Great Supper, the Good Samaritan, the Pharisee and Publican; commanding the Apostles to preach "repentance and remission of sins among all nations." All these things Luke only has recorded, as also the mission of the seventy, a number typical of the world as that of the Apostles was of the twelve tribes,* and many other facts equally significant.† He mentions Christ praying on eight occasions, and partaking of food on seven occasions,‡ not named in the other Gospels, thus representing Him as entirely identified with human nature; and lest there might be a possible idea that salvation was contingent on sex, he introduces women into his narrative with especial frequency. In many accounts which he seems to take from the previous Gospels, there are additions, alterations, and omissions, strikingly in accordance with his design;§ and in supplementing Matthew's statement of Christ's legal pedigree with one of the natural lineage, he halts not at Abraham, but carries the list back to the common father of the race.

Some twenty years now passed away, and though the Church possessed three authorized accounts of the life and teaching of its Head, yet the picture was still far from complete. So entirely had the three Evangelists confined their narratives to the scenes in the provincial districts of Palestine, that we could not gather from them with certainty that Jesus had been at Jerusalem at all before the last week of His life; nor had they set forth clearly the gradual growth of the hostility of the Sanhedrim towards Him. Scarcely any portions of His teaching had been recorded concerning His Divine nature, the redemptive character of His mission, or the work of the Spirit; and though the more simple precepts and parables were doubtless better adapted to the undeveloped spiritual capacities of the new converts, it would now be desirable to feed with "strong meat" the large bodies of mature Christians in all the great cities of the empire; and if this was already done in the oral and epistolary instructions of the apostles, to shew that they taught no lofty or profound truths which had not been to some extent the subjects of Christ's own teaching. Then again, heresies had crept in here and there, chiefly respecting the twofold nature of Christ, and it would

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* See Ellicott, *Huls. Lect.*, p. 256, and note.

† See Birks, Hor. Evang., Book iv., Chap. vi.

‡ Luke iii. 21; v. 16; vi. 12; vii. 36; ix. 18, 28; x. 38—40; xi. 1, 37; xiv. 1; xix. 5—7; xxiii. 34, 46; xxiv. 30, 43.

§ See Birks, *Hor. Evang.*, Book i. Chap. iv.

be well if these could be met by the recorded sayings of the Lord Himself.

All these motives may have influenced the mind of the now aged and only surviving apostle, St. John, when presiding at Ephesus over the seven Churches of Asia, to accede (as tradition says *) to the prayer of the younger pastors, and to compose a fourth and supplemental gospel from his personal recollections.

And truly must the Saviour's promise, that the Holy Ghost should "bring all things to the remembrance" of the apostles, have been fulfilled in this case, when we find John relating even the little incidents of half a century ago with all the vividness of a diary. There is scarcely a chapter in the Gospel without instances of this; thus, when Andrew and John spend the day with Jesus, as mentioned in chap. i., it is stated that they came "*about the tenth hour*;" and when Jesus sits on the well (chap. iv.), that it was the *sixth hour*; at the very opening, the incidents of six days are related in succession;† and the accounts of the marriage at Cana and the Lord's Supper are particularly minute.

The supplemental character of the Gospel is evident throughout. Only one event, prior to the Passion Week, is recorded, which is related by the other Evangelists, viz., the feeding of the five thousand; while at the same time numberless allusions occur which prove the exact agreement of John's statement with theirs. The new historical matter in this Gospel is of the most important character; without it we could not form a chronology of Christ's ministry,‡ we should know little more than the names of the apostles, we should be ignorant of many miracles,—especially the raising of Lazarus, so important as the exciting cause of the arrest of Jesus. Above all, we should have, but for St. John, a very partial view of the Lord's character, both in its Divine and human aspects; we should see His outer but not His inner life; we should not see Him weeping for a departed friend, or parched and weary at the well; nor, on the other hand, holding communion with the Father in that solemn seventeenth chapter; we should have lost the wonderful conversation with Nicodemus, with the woman of Samaria, with the Galileans respecting the bread of life, with the eleven in the upper room. We should have little insight into the mysterious unity of the Father

* Smith's *Bibl. Dict.*, Art. *Gospel of John.*

† See ch. i. 29, 35, 43, ii. 1. A great number of similar examples are enumerated by Birks, *Hor. Evang.*, Book iv., ch. vi.

‡ The received chronology is almost entirely based on John ii. 13, iv. 35, v. 1, vi. 4, vii. 2, x. 22, xi. 55, compared of course with the less precise accounts of the other Evangelists.

and the Son, which is perhaps the main revelation of this book,—for as Ellicott says, "In the synoptical Gospels, the Incarnate Son is displayed to us in the operative majesty of outwardly exercised omnipotence, in the fourth Gospel He is revealed to us in the tranquil majesty of conscious unity with the Eternal Father." * That St. John was mainly instrumental in refuting the early heresies of the Church, we know from the multitude of quotations from him in the controversial works of the fourth and fifth centuries;† and it seems clear that to do so more effectually, the Spirit permitted him to adopt and consecrate to this sacred purpose the language of the Alexandrian philosophy.‡ The whole Gospel rings with the declarations of the opening passage, "The Word was God," and, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us."

E. S.

(To be Continued.)

A LETTER TO OUR FELLOW-TEACHERS ON THE VARIANCE WHICH IS SAID TO EXIST BETWEEN THE BIBLE AND THE FACTS OF GEOLOGY AND HISTORY.

BY THE CONTRIBUTOR OF THE PAPERS ON "SCRIPTURE PHILOLOGY"

MY VERY DEAR FELLOW-TEACHERS.—Although every age is disposed to say, "We live in dangerous and eventful times," there are times, no doubt,—such as those of persecution, for instance—which are especially so; and then faith is tried, and anxiety prevails.

Now the times seem full of danger; and "the faith of some" is likely to be "overthrown" by the present attacks on revealed religion, as was theirs in the Apostles' day, who met not prepared, and dependently enough, the speculations of Hymenæus and Philetus: 2 Tim. ii. 18. But there is, thank God, a very remarkable set-off

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* *Huls. Lect.*, p. 31.

† It has been ascertained that if the Gospel of St. John were lost, the whole of it could be gathered together again from the quotations in the works of the Fathers.

‡ It seems clear that the employment by St. John of such words as λογος, φως μονογενης, indicate a reference to Gnostic theories. See Alford, *Gr. Test.*, Vol. i. *Prolog.*, ch. v. § 8.

against the anti-christian tendency of the speculations of our day, here in England. It is encouraging, for example of what we mean, to find such leading periodicals as the "Times" newspaper writing in the following impressive strain,—"Just now, as if by accident, by the chance touch of a new and careless hand, there has been raised once more the awful question whether HEAVEN has indeed bent itself to earth, and whether the long story of a Divine interference and preternatural events, be, or be not, a record of facts. Most men, as if death-struck, are giving attention to an inquiry which but yesterday they would rather have left at rest."—[*Leading Article, May* 27].

We elders well remember when, to say the very least, religion was ignored in the columns of leading literary papers: the case is very different now, and we cannot but conclude that Truth, accompanied, as we trust, by the Spirit of Grace, has very widely diffused itself among men of all ranks and attainments in this country, though thousands of them wish, and perhaps wisely, to be of no colour but white.

We most of us know that the two broadest fields in which the battle between light and darkness is going on, are the fields of geology and of history. In scientific geology, leaders appear who tell us that man, instead of having existed upon the earth some few thousand years, has occupied our globe thousands of ages, although Cuvier, the father of the palæozoic and anatomical branch of the science, deliberately declared that Geology confirmed Scripture, particularly on this point. Also we have lived to see men holding professorships in our public institutions, stand up and assert that Man, his brain being compared with the ape family of dumb animals, shews that he may be clearly traced to that origin, through an obscure process of development called "natural selection"—a process which its advocates themselves cannot very well explain; that he is not a special creation after the image of the Most High God; and that the difference between the monkey's and the human hand proves as much. Did any one ever think that a greater perfection of bodily organs constituted man's pre-eminence? Common sense tells us it is his *mind*, which is so God-like that the gift *of language* is required as the vehicle for its unlimited action, and his moral perfections, and his exalted aspirations, that raise him immeasurably above "the beasts that perish." Who does not know that a fish can take the prize from man in swimming, a bird in flying, a beast in strength and agility, and even an insect in visual perception? and each because it possesses more perfect bodily organs in the direction in which it excels.

Again, in the field of history, there are teachers who have the temerity to assert that the chief book of Moses—the Book of Leviticus—is a mere human treatise and compilation, full of statements and assertions which are incompatible with Nature, contrary to fact, and even opposed to possibility. And yet the author of these assertions professes to believe in Christianity! The Master Himself has settled that question, we think, when He says, "If ye had believed Moses ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me: but if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?"

Dear fellow-teachers, there is not one of these foolish objections of a writer who was sent out a chief officer in the Christian Church that is not as old, as harmless as the waters that Moses himself struck out from the rock. No wise man—and all such have taken into account *the very great age* of these writings; so great that the tongue in which they are transcribed has become a dead language; Hebrew, now-a-days, not being the vernacular even of the Jews themselves—no wise man, we say, was ever affected as to his belief of them by the discrepancies and obscurities which they contain. It has been impossible, without constant miracle directed to the contrary result, but that omissions, mistakes, repetitions, and variations, must, in this longest record of human events, have entered, and been handed down, creating at length apparent contradictions among the innumerable copies of the law, which were multiplied, not as now, by a metal type, which cannot err, but by the weary hands of ten thousand transcribers. Think of the very great antiquity of these inspired writings of Moses: older than the writings of "that exceeding great city"—Nineveh—the long buried records of which, on slabs of stone, now cover the walls of passages in the British Museum; these slabs are full of writing, but no one can make out with certainty what it all means, or perhaps what any of it means.

As to the *dates* contained in the Books of Moses, the ancient system of notation among the Hebrews is very obscure; and if one account of it is to be depended upon, it is the most probable thing that can be imagined that tens might become hundreds, and hundreds thousands, by the mere addition of the spurt of the pen. A notion of the antiquity of these dates may be obtained by what, if I remember rightly, Sir Isaac Newton says of the first profane (that is to say Greek) date of an event of history, and that date capable only of astronomical verification. It takes us back only to the reign of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, and *he* must have looked back to the time of Moses as antiquity.

Take the following example in proof, both of the way in which talented and wise men have always regarded these discrepancies, and of their full cognisance of them. "Of the difficulties and discre-

pancies which occur in the sacred writings of the Hebrews, perhaps two-thirds are found in passages which contain numbers. Of the primitive Hebrew system of notation we are most likely ignorant; but the manner in which the numbers are denoted in the present copies of the sacred books, is remarkably liable to error and misapprehension. It is by no means easy to reconcile the enormous numbers contained in the census, with the language of other passages in the Scriptures, particularly that of the seventh chapter of Deuteronomy. The nation which could own 600,000 fighting men is described as the fewest of all people, as inferior in number, it should seem, to each of the seven greater and mightier nations which then inhabited Canaan; and it is remarkable that, while there has been much controversy, whether the whole area of Palestine could contain the Hebrew settlers, the seven nations are 'to be put out by little and little, lest the beasts of the field increase on the new occupants.'"—(Millman's History of the Jews, vol. i. p. 40).

Again, if we examine another branch of these futile objections, the notices in natural history which occur occasionally in the books of Moses, we find because they are so ancient, that we cannot be certain what animals, or other productions of nature are expressly meant by the Hebrew names of them that have come down to us. Who knows for certain what "Bdellium" was, or what that gem which we suppose might be "the Onyx stone"? The same uncertainty must, and does, prevail in respect to such names, in every ancient treatise in natural history;—take Theophrastus' treatise on Gems, by way of example. It is now lying before me. He lived only about 300 years before Christ, and is accounted a veracious writer. Now, out of about 200 different gems, which he carefully describes, a very great many of them cannot be identified by their names. Lapidaries in every succeeding age have continued to use the same names, but the stones now designated by them do not answer to Theophrastus' description, and so we naturally take the description instead of the names, and apply it to the gem it answers to; and while we thank the author for his accuracy, and feel no doubt about his veraciousness, we are not at all surprised at discrepancies which are clearly the effect of time and change, both on language and on other things, for while some gems are lost to us altogether, some have been discovered of which Theophrastus knew nothing. He writes about adamant, for instance. Now the adamant may be the diamond, or it may not be: but of what consequence is that in regard to Theophrastus' veracity?

The same change produced by time on language, and on human knowledge, affects every department of natural history; and the above example, in relation to gems, may be paralleled in the other classes of natural productions, whether plants or animals.

And now let us glance at the field of Geology, in which, by digging, here and there, the very great age of man upon our earth is said to be demonstrated. A great deal of what is said here is really mere theory, and all of it inference only from disputed, puzzling, and local facts. The worst of it is that this study is chiefly in the hands of men of no, or of doubtful religion; men who ignore Christianity, and never frequent our places of worship, but habitually spend the Lord's day in scientific pursuits or excursions, perfectly unconscious of the fact that that day was so named and distinguished from the other days of the week, at the beginning of the Christian era, that it might ever be a standing monument of our Lord's resurrection from the dead, as the earnest and prelude of our own. But amidst such scepticism and indifference, what wonder? Can men who advocate, as professors of science in our public institutions, the ape-origin of the human race, be expected to believe in a resurrection of the body? *Yet this doctrine, or none, is the centre of Christianity, and of revealed religion.* Had good men and true, like the late Professor Henslow, possession of the chief chairs in our temples of science, *as they ought to have*, we should find very different inferences from geological facts presented to the public mind: as things are it is very greatly to be regretted that when most pious men do touch the subject they are so unqualified, by reason of the important pursuits and occupations that have previously filled up their time, that they do little or no good, but rather the reverse. Few qualified persons, thoroughly imbued with revealed religion, have had much opportunity to carry the hammer over the mountain ranges, and the pick-axe into the cave recesses of this and foreign lands.

After such a sentence as the last we shall naturally be asked what we have done ourselves, to justify it?

Well, we will, as shortly as we can, just tell our fellow-teachers some of our own experience in the field of geology, in search of the age of man upon our earth.

About five-and-twenty years ago, we explored our first bone-cave in the rocks of south Wales, and were the first to bring *that* cave before the public. In it we found *the water-worn* fragments of the bones of such great but now foreign animals, as the elephant, the lion, the rhinoceros, the bear, the wolf, &c. We did not look for man's works; for five-and-twenty years ago scientific men were content, as we said before, with the dictum of old Cuvier, the father of Palæontology, that Geology only confirmed the statement of Scripture,—namely, that it is but some few thousand years since man was created. The cave we are now speaking of has since been removed, and its rocky walls, burnt into lime for the purposes of husbandry; but we have carefully preserved the bones. *It is certain*

that this cave, and the bones it contained, had been *washed about by a flood or floods of water*. There is no contradiction of Scripture here.

Next, after some flint weapons,—some called flakes, some knives, some celts and arrow-heads,—had been discovered in a cave in Devonshire, and elsewhere, *some of which* certainly were the work of man, we resumed our hammer, spade, and mattock, and attacked not another cave first, but some tumuli, or burying-place of antiquity, situated on the top of a ridge of rocks, which rocks are themselves cavernous. The result of our researches was that we not only dug out old urns and vessels, some of which had contained ashes of the dead, but also flint chips, artificially shaped into knives and arrow-heads. Here, then, we had proof that flint weapons or tools were of no greater antiquity in this country than the ashes, or—in some cases—the undecayed skeletons of the race of men to whom the graves belonged.

Our next adventure was to take our tools, and a companion or two with us, into one of the caves of the ridge itself, on which the tumuli stand; and here, having a definite object in view, our researches soon brought to light no less than seventy-five or six of these very flint tools, to which such antiquity is ascribed; they were mixed in the earth with the same bones of foreign wild animals we had found before; and in the midst of them, and as deep in the soil, among other modern things, was the handle of a rusty Sheffield pen-knife and part of a comb. The pen-knife handle has an oval metal disc, as usual, in the centre to receive the initials of the future owner. Well, as these flint-chips correspond with the flints in the tumuli here, again, is no proof of great antiquity; but rather the probability arises that they owe their origin to the same race of aboriginal inhabitants of these isles, though, in fact, there is no doubt, history being our guide, that several families of Celtic and Teutonic, or other adventurers, lived in this country formerly at the same time; and that some were more acquainted than others with substances fitted for human convenience, and more able to procure them.

Here our readers will be pleased to allow us a short digression, yet hardly to be called such. In Joshua v. 2, 3, occurs the following remarkable notice of early flint-knives, and the use they were put to:—"And the Lord said unto Joshua, make thee knives of flints, and circumcise the children of Israel the second time. And Joshua made him knives of flints (margin), and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of Haaraloth." But this is not all: *what became of these flint-knives* is noticed elsewhere; and, as far as

we know, *this* is the first time the following remarkable extract, from the Septuagint, has been printed in connection with the subject we are discussing. The Septuagint version of Joshua xxiv. 30 is filled up as the following italics indicate:—"And they buried Joshua in the border of his inheritance, ... and *they placed with him in his tomb* (q. a tumulus?), *the flint-knives with which he had circumcised the children of Israel, ... and there they are to this day.*" Recalling what we have said about our discoveries in the tumuli on the ridge mentioned before, our readers will say, this is a very remarkable notice; and as the present race of learned Welshmen declare their ancestors only used flint-knives for sacred purposes, knowing well the use of iron, it will not be forgotten hereafter by students in antiquities, who may read this paper.

We have yet one more personal adventure to record, and that came off only last month. We had long known the existence of a third cave in the same line of rocks, and this also we have just explored. The results are exactly the same,—bones of large foreign quadrupeds, and flint-flakes. Now, to some of our readers who live where flint is common, this will be nothing so wonderful;—such are not aware, perhaps, that there are whole districts in England where you cannot meet with a flint-stone at all: *this*, where I write, is one of them; our strata yield no flints; the inference, then, is that they must have been brought here for certain useful purposes by man.

But what of very great antiquity appears in these discoveries of ours? Nothing at all; quite the reverse, when we consider the admixture of the fragments of very modern implements with such tools or weapons. Nor, even when articles of undoubted human construction are found at great depths, is this *demonstration;* for the effects of water, in raising banks, especially in river-beds, are very great and very sudden.

If it were not that we fear to occupy much more space, we could show this by many trustworthy notices we have preserved from time to time.

But it is said that there is no iron in these tombs, and among these remains; and that thence the notion of great antiquity is confirmed, and that there was successively "a stone, a bronze, and an iron age," indicating the advancement of man in arts and intelligence. It is far more certain, on the contrary, that families of men have *lost*, by immigration, both the materials and the skill which was necessary to the working of the most useful materials, such as iron. And, again, the absence of iron now, in many places where flint-tools are found, is no proof it was not there formerly. Suppose a loaf of sugar, or a lump of salt, had been left in a cave among flint-knives, who would expect to find it? Now, iron dissolves away in water as

clean as salt does, where the presence of certain acids occurs. Within a stone's throw of my desk, at this moment, there is a welling-fount, the water of which is as clear as a dew-drop when I bring in a tumbler of it, but it is as full of iron nevertheless, as the sea-waters is of salt; and will deposit it in yellow floculi only by exposure to the air for a short time.

In short, my dear fellow-teachers, to qualify *any* man, even a Lyell, to treat the public with inferences, such as those which are drawn from a few local observations on the great antiquity of man, he ought to be a first-rate chemist, a profound reasoner, an impartial judge, an infallible observer, an encyclopœdia for knowledge, a Methuselah for age, and a great deal more besides; and, when he is all this, he ought to put down this one text at the head of every page of his field note-book, as a caution to himself, "God taketh the wise in their own craftiness!"

We have yet to say a word upon certain human skulls, supposed to be the most ancient in the world, that have been found in two of these caves. Even the advocate himself most distinguished in the cause of the development theory, says in his notorious lecture, in so many words, "in no sense can the Neanderthal bones be regarded as the remains of a human being intermediate between man and the apes." Well then, what we say is, let these advocates of wild and anti-christian speculation, wait at least so long as the time when they have found a thing, or the skeleton of a thing, that is neither man nor monkey, but "something intermediate." But even when that turns up, we do not see they will be any nearer a proof that God did not "make man after his own image, in his own likeness," or that man is not the heir of immortality; and but only a "little lower than the angels," even now.

In conclusion, then dear readers, let us be more purposed than ever, in the strength of God, and in the meekness of wisdom, to "hold fast the profession of our faith (the faith we profess) without wavering, for He is faithful that promised"—which word faithful here, has respect to the sincerity, and courage we have shewn before man, in our daily humble walk with God.

Him have we served, though but a little—Him have we reverenced and worshipped, though amidst the infirmities of our flesh—Him have we trusted in, though possibly with much weakness—but we *have* done these things; and truly and faithfully the Lord hath said we shall never be confounded; and so we shall find it, when this heaven and earth pass away, and this salt-sea is passed away with them.

I am, dear fellow-teachers, your affectionate work-fellow,
Tenby.

G. B. S.

SCRIPTURE PHILOLOGY.

No. IX.—Our Lord's Idioms *(Continued)*.

Matt. x. 29. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father: but even the very hairs of your head are all numbered." See also Luke xii. 6, 7.

This *saying* of our Lord reminds us just now of the planet Venus, whose rich, full, lustrous light draws away the eye each evening from the glittering host of heaven her fellow-stars, and even from the queen regent herself. We turn again and again to gaze at it, and want to be nearer to the orb of beauty. So is it with these words: the lesson they teach us so simply, but with such full effect, is,

the special Providence of God:

the difficulty of this subject, and the consolation too, is conveyed here in the words, "without your Father." They tell us that God has ordered such earthly event before-hand; and that He it is who brings about whatever happens, for He is the doer of all things.

This is the great truth of the government of the universe; and the truth that consoles the man of faith and prayer; though how it can comport with the free agency of good and evil men, and good and evil spirits is an intricate mystery.

Comparing the words in v. 10, with 1 Sam. xiv. 45, we are led to think the saying was *proverbial* among the Jews: and in studying the doctrine of special Providence, it adds an interest to regard it from a Jewish point of view.

Of course the pious Jews believed, as we do, that Jehovah "ordereth all things both in heaven and earth:" but then the peculiarity of their Providence consisted in this, that it was from Judea, as from the centre of the earth, and from the temple as the centre of Judea, that God's *particular* as well as *general* Providence was carried out. Many and many most beautiful passages in the Psalms, and elsewhere take much of their force from this fact;—"*Arise* O Lord, judge thou the earth—for thou shalt take all heathen to Thine inheritance." From whence shall He *arise?* From the mercy seat of the holy temple, of course. So when Daniel prayed for strength, he prayed toward Jerusalem; and from the ark of the covenant in answer to that prayer, the arm was extended that "stopt the mouths of the lions," in the dungeon. So, again, Jonah turned to the Shechinah on that "throne of grace," as its antitype is called when in the fish's belly, and the fish instinctively obeyed the mandate, as the lions, and the

bickering flame had previously done. When this same over-zealous prophet fled to Tarshish, it was to flee "from the presence of the Lord," by passing beyond the boundaries of His earthly kingdom.

Founded on this fact it is, that because from the Holy of Holies as from a centre, God governed the earth in general, and the Holy Land in particular, as the God of Providence, as well as of grace, the throne on which He rested was attended by those wonderful emblematic beings the Cherubim. The Jewish mind often sees allusions to them where the English does not. *These* as to their many eyes, and swift instantaneous wheels, are "the eyes of the Lord that run to and fro through the whole earth, to show himself strong in behalf of him whose heart is perfect towards him," 2 Chron. xvi. 9, intimating thereby the interference of a peculiar and special providence. Compare Zech. iv. 10. And to *these* again in regard to their wondrous plumage, allusion is made in the singular promise, "He shall shelter thee under his wings, and thou shalt be safe under his feathers, as beneath the shield and buckler of his righteousness and truth."

Again, further, the *agencies*, namely, the laws and operations of nature, through which God carries on His general Providence, are spoken of in terms interchangeable with the attributes of the Cherubim, "He maketh His angels *winds*, and a flame of fire His ministers, He rode upon a cherub and did fly; He came flying on the *wings* of the wind" to my relief, sings David when he describes the Providence which had "delivered him from all his enemies."

It was a *grand* expectation the old Jews had, that in the days of Messiah, *He* should rule as God, under the whole heaven, "and that the laws of Moses shall then be universally obeyed without any constraint or disturbance," as Maimonides has summed it up.

And does not our own doctrine, though not in the fanciful way of *some* among our later writers, create the same lofty expectation? We see no ground to think but that the word "kingdom," both in the beginning and ending of the Lord's prayer, is to be taken in one and the same sense, and that our most exalted and purified human aspirations shall at that day, take substance, being, and reality of life, when there shall come, after an universal conflagration, "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Well, in the mean time, it is sweet to look at the general and peculiar providence of God, though He no longer exercises it from the mercy seat in the temple, as the Shechinah, but from "heaven itself," through the agency of our Lord Jesus, to whom "*all* power is given, both in heaven and in earth." "He is Lord of all."

There is one way of looking at Providence, which, for all practical

purposes, is very simple, very Scriptural, and very satisfactory namely, that the *Lord governs the world as a good man governs his house.*

Every good man knows his family have *general* wants, which must be constantly provided for. His children want a home; they want food; they want clothing; they want counsel; and so he provides these things, *as matters of course.* In like manner God provides the earth for our house; its produce, ripened by "sun, and rain, and fruitful seasons," for our food; natural clothing for such of His creatures as cannot procure artificial garments; and the light of nature for counsel to the heathen, Ps. xciv. 10; while He grants us, in addition, and as the plainest counsel, "the knowledge of His laws."

But a good man must do more for his household than make a general daily provision; there will occur every day things dependent, not on the wants which man can foresee, but on events which he cannot anticipate, and which must be looked to as they arise—such, as unexpected calls, unlooked for accidents, new contingencies unforeseen occurrences of many kinds, which a good man must provide for *then and there.* Now, as the daily provision which he makes answers to the general providence of God, so this latter habit of meeting the extra calls of the day, by extra and immediate interference and attention, answers to His *special* providence. Here comes in our comfort—"Not a sparrow falls without your Father. Fear not; the very hairs of your head are all numbered." Here, too, in this field of action, comes in especially, though not exclusively, *the place for prayer.*

Some dear and sincere ones there are who are at a loss to see place for prayer in regard to temporal things, though these, indeed, cannot be separated from things spiritual, so far as the interference of Providence is concerned in them. They cannot suppose that God will stop "the wheel of nature," as St. James calls the course of the world, to meet their wants and wishes. Well, but beside this wheel of nature, beside the general laws impressed on all things, is there not, also, the interference of ten thousand wills, free and unfettered, both of men and angels, whose actings and counter-actings must be met by a special interposition, to ward off evil from God's servants, or to "fill their mouths with good?" And so the Collect, "Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men." How touching it is, and how true; and hence what place is found for prayer in every moment of life!

What we have said of the old Jewish view of special and general providence as carried on over the whole world, from the throne in

the temple as the centre, and also of special providence in connection with prayer, finds many plain illustrations in the Jews' holy book, now become ours, namely, the Old Testament. Take the case of Hezekiah:—trouble is come to him; he receives a most insulting and arrogant letter from a proud and ambitious idolater, whose troops surround the city of Jerusalem, under the auspices of a victorious commander. Does he pray to "the Father," as we do? No; he goes into the Temple, and spreads the letter before the mercy seat, and so before THE LORD. This action of faith is immediately followed by a providential interposition a thousand miles off. It has come into the mind of Tirhakah, King of Ethiopia, to invade Assyria: and the thought turns to a purpose, and the purpose now to an act of aggressive warfare; and so the siege of Jerusalem is raised, and the tyrant perishes. The sceptre of that temple's throne the hearts of men obeyed, however distant, and obey it still, through from another sphere.

We leave our fellow-teachers to multiply similar examples from the Book of God, impressed again, for the thousandth time, with the fact that *their* scepticism in regard to revealed religion is not so much to be wondered at who have not enjoyed the unspeakable advantage of having known from childhood the Holy Scriptures, and who never in manhood even deign to read them; for the small threads of evidence, independent of the greater cords, by which it unites itself to the stock to become the ingrafted Word, are as numerous and as living as the fibres of the heart itself.

Tenby. E. E. S.

THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT AND VOW.

I WISH to offer a few words, if they may be thought worthy of a place in the "Quarterly," to my fellow-labourers in the work of Sunday school teaching, concerning some of the fundamental truths brought before us in our Church Catechism. Perhaps there is no subject to which our attention as teachers is more directed than to this part of our Prayer-book, and yet I have found by experience, that perhaps there is no subject which requires more care in preparation on the part of the teacher, and in the study of which he can find fewer really good explanatory books to help him. I have seen many books, as I dare say most of my readers have also, professing to explain our Church Catechism, but the greater number of them

would lead us to adopt erroneous opinions, and it is against these that I am anxious to warn my readers. Not that I at all depreciate the labours of those who have gone before us. I would choose the good which they taught, and remedy as much as possible the evil.

The first question to be considered is the nature of the baptismal covenant, and here it is important to bear in mind that God's covenant with us differs, not only in degree, but also in kind from those between man and man. When we enter into a covenant with our neighbour, we promise one thing on condition that he will perform another. But this is not the nature of God's covenants with man. He gives us certain gifts, but asks for nothing from us in return, except faith to receive them, requiring only that such gifts shall be used by us. For example, let us take the first covenant between God and man, which we find in the Bible (Gen. ix). We find there God promising a regularity in the order of nature, which if received in faith, would become a blessing to man, and to his posterity, but, if neglected, a curse. At baptism, when we could do nothing for God, we were brought into covenant with Him. Into such a covenant we, His creatures, cannot refuse to enter, and now that we can understand the privileges which we enjoy from that covenant, He requires that we should use them. Such a covenant, and such a covenant alone is worthy of an Omnipotent Creator. We should be wrong then in comparing this with a covenant between man and man, unless we were very careful to draw out the distinction which I have pointed out.

Next, concerning the three privileges which are spoken of in the second answer of the Catechism. They can all be referred to the first one there given: viz., membership with Christ. This expression will be better understood by reference to such passages as, 1 Cor. xii. 12—27, Eph. iv. 4—6. Our Lord uses the metaphor of the vine (John xv.), and St. Paul that of the olive tree (Rom. xi. 16—25), to express this relation with Christ. In 1 Pet. ii. 5—10, the individuality of each member is more clearly brought forward. It follows that if we are members of Christ, we must be children of God by adoption, and "if children, then heirs," or inheritors (*i.e.* land-proprietors, *χληρονομοι*) of the kingdom of heaven—the Church—(Matt. xiii. 47—50), in other words, partakers of the blessings of the Church Militant and heirs through hope of the Church Triumphant. If, however, we prefer to speak of each of these privileges separately, we may say that the membership implies holiness or devotion; thesonship by adoption, love, and obedience; and the words "inheritors of the kingdom of heaven," earnestness and zeal with hope for the future, all resting, as we have before noticed, on the foundation of faith.

Lastly, we come to the baptismal vow, which is divided into three parts:—renunciation, faith, and obedience. The two last are explained by the creed and the commandments. Concerning the first our catechism tells us that our sponsors promised in our name to renounce three things—the devil, the world, and the flesh. But these are not as some make them out to be, three distinct kinds of sin; they are only three aspects of sin, and Scripture refers all sin to either of them indifferently (1 John iii. 8; iii. 15, 16; Gal. v. 16—24.). The first speaks of sin in itself, the second of temptation to sin from without, the third of the susceptibility to sin from within. He who mixes the poison is the devil, the poisoned air is the world, the susceptibility of the disease is found in the flesh. To speak briefly then, we renounce sin, the work of the devil, but as this would convey but a faint impression to the minds of those whom we teach, it will be found useful to arrange the different kinds of sin under separate heads. To find what sin is we must put in contrast the attributes of God, viz., holiness, love, and truth, to which we must add faith, an attribute which belongs to man as a creature, and then we have before us the four cardinal graces. The opposites of these are selfishness opposed to love, falsehood to truth, uncleanness to purity, pride to faith. Each of these is referred to the devil in Scripture, see John viii. 44; Mark v. 12, 13; 1 Tim. iii. 6.

I hope that the above will be sufficient to give some sure basis upon which to build up the instruction of some of our Sunday scholars with reference to the Church catechism. It must necessarily be but an outline of such instruction, since it would be impossible to adapt it to each individual class. Permit me to give one word of encouragement to teachers before I conclude. I have felt with many that the work which God has put into our hands is often apparently a fruitless one. I say, apparently, for God's work must bear some fruit—and yet I cannot think that we should despond at this; let us remember that it is our duty in this life "to be witnesses of Christ;" if we do this duty what have we to fear? I cannot say it is a sin, but is it not presumption to seek for results, which must rest in God's hands alone?

Cheltenham. W. F. A.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS.

On the Difference between the Natural and Spiritual Conflicts.

The reality of both these conflicts is attested by a thousand witnesses. The conflict is not confined to spiritual men, but is common to all men where the moral sense exists.

> "I see the right, and I approve it too,
> Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue,"

writes Ovid. Horace had the same experience of his own fallen nature:

> "Whate'er may hurt me I with joy pursue,
> Whate'er may do me good, with horror view."

Arrian, a Greek author, speaks even more plainly if possible, and what is remarkable uses even the very words of St. Paul: —

"For truly he who sins, does not will sin, but wishes to walk uprightly: yet it is manifest that what he wills, he doth not, and what he wills not, he doth."

In the Medæa, Euripides follows suit: "But I am *overcome* by sin, and I well understand the evil which I presume to commit. Passion however, is more powerful than my reason, which is the cause of the greatest evils to mortal men."

These testimonies are sufficient as to the conflict in natural men: St. Paul's experience, Rom. vii., and our own, of the same conflict in spiritual men, trusting that we are such.

Now as to the *difference*, it would not appear that there is any difference at all as to the parties, or as to the objects against which the conflict is waged.

The origin of it is *law*: there is no conflict at all where there is no law known, or where it has not "entered." "The *motions* of sin, are by the law"—it wakes up the natural conscience, and then there is conflict. There is the same *natural* conscience both in converted and unconverted men. In Rom. vii. there is no room for the question, in reality, which has been often put, "Is it the experience of a converted or of an unconverted man?" It is both: only St. Paul happened to be a converted man when he wrote that chapter: *but he knew the conflict before.*

So far then there is no difference between the conflict in natural and spiritual persons; but now comes in the main, grand, fact which may be called, if we will, a difference in the conflicts: it is in truth a difference only in the *issues*. In the case of the man who is in Christ, the conflict is successful, and sin is overcome: in the case of the natural man the conflict is fruitless, and sin habitually overcomes him. "To will is present with him, but how to *perform* that which is good, he finds not." "The gulf," says a good writer "between saying and doing is never bridged over till Christ is known."

This is a serious truth: it makes the man who is "working out his own salvation with fear and trembling," understand, among other things, that there may be more than one "generation that are clean in their own sight, but are not washed from their filthiness"—an enlightened, as well as a self-righteous family. And yet God would have us distinguish men that differ, as well as things. A soldier, who wears the king's uniform, and has a loyal heart too, gets many a wound and foil, perhaps, from want of that experience and wisdom which he will acquire before long. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and he will shew them His covenant."

MAIMONIDES ON THE LOVE OF GOD.

The following is the passage referred to in our last number:—

"Let no man say, 'I observe the precepts of the law for this reason, that I may gain the advantage mentioned in the law, and make myself worthy of the life of the world that is to come;' or, 'I therefore abstain from the crimes forbidden in our law, that I may avoid the curses spoken of there, and not be cut off from the life of the world to come.' God is not to be worshipped after this manner; because he who serves God thus, pays obedience to Him out of fear only; and doth not come up to the excellence of divine worship which the prophets and wise men attained to. For none worship God out of such regard as this, but very ignorant men, women, and children, who at first are taught to obey God out of fear, that they might worship him out of love when arrived at a more full growth of knowledge.

"This was the heroic piety of our father Abraham whom God blessed for ever, and vouchsafed to call His friend because he obeyed and worshipped Him out of love. This too is the height of that virtue which God by the mouth of Moses commands us to endeavour at—'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God'—and as soon as one loves God laudably and worthily, he will observe all the precepts of the law out of love. But what is that worthy and laudable love? Such it is, when our whole, and most vehement, and most ardent love is on

Him, and our whole soul is bound up in the study of Him—is wholly employed in it like one who is in love with any person most dear to him, and whether he lies down, or eats, or drinks, continually thinks on the objects of his affections: and this according to the precepts in Deut. vi. 5; and x. 12; 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul.'

"And Solomon's metaphorical expressions in the Canticles are to be taken in the same sense: 'I am sick with love.' The whole Book of the Canticles is a metaphorical and figurative discourse of the love of God.

"The Talmud says you must do whatever you do, out of the love of God; it must be done for the sake of his love. Besides the Rabins have said 'be ye not like those servants who serve the Lord only on condition of receiving a reward:' but be ye like those servants who serve him not for the sake of gain and advantage—for the Lord is to be obeyed upon the sole account of His being Sovereign Lord of all; which is the same as to say, do your duty out of love; but nobody loves God but inasmuch as he knows Him: every one's love and knowledge go hand and hand. If his knowledge be but little, his love will be so too. For this reason every one ought to settle himself to study, and to endeavour after a knowledge of things which may lead him to such a knowledge of God as the human faculties are capable of entertaining."

It may surprise some of us to find such light, and such views, in the mind—not to say the heart—of the unconverted Jews; but is it certain such men were unconverted? And even in respect to such Rabbis as Maimonides, who lived in Spain long after the Christian era, one is called to remember that Christianity was never presented to them but in the repulsive form of popery. One of them says, "Whenever I looked into a Christian temple I was obliged to flee for my life; for there I was sure to see such images as are forbidden in the second commandment, and the people bowing down to them." He felt, and truly enough, that the true Messiah could never countenance anything in direct opposition to the moral law. I have often thought, if only for the sake of poor English Jews, how careful should good men be not to have even painted images in our churches, though but on glass windows.

G. N. S.

The Teacher in his School.

NOTES OF A LESSON GIVEN TO A SENIOR CLASS.

SUBJECT.—THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THIS is a subject which ought to be interesting to every christian. If already communicants we should often recal the nature and design of this sacrament, and in looking forward to becoming such, it is of the highest importance that we should form right views of this blessed ordinance.

By what other names is it known? *Sacrament.* The term does not occur in Scripture, but signifies the oath by which soldiers in the Roman army bound themselves to be faithful to their generals. Meaning we attach to it? Four things necessary to a christian sacrament. 1st, A visible sign. 2nd, This sign should set forth an inward grace. 3rd, It should be ordained by Christ himself. 4th, It should be a means whereby we receive grace. *Communion.*—Joint participation (1), with Christ (2), with his people. *Eucharist.*—Greek word, signifying thanksgiving.

In all study of this subject *the history* of its institution should stand first. Let us read the four narratives of it, Matt. xxvi. 26—28; Mark xiv. 22—24; Luke xxii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. xi. 23—25 The prayer of consecration (Communion service) brings these together—read it. The more we realise the simple idea of the ordinance which these words bring before us, the more we shall profit by it: Let us view it,—

I. As an emblem. What meant? A sign or symbol, something visible, representing what is invisible. What is visible? Bread, broken bread, and wine, poured out wine. What then is represented?

1. ***Christ's human nature.*** "My body, my blood." Why does our Lord make His human nature of such importance? It was the dwelling place of God. John i. 1, 14. He would have our minds fixed on this mystery of godliness. Compare 1 Tim. iii. 16.

2. ***The death of Christ.*** It is broken bread, poured out wine, and this by design. Compare the Apostle's words 1 Cor. xi. 26. It is a representation of a broken Saviour, a wounded, bruised, bleeding, dying, Redeemer. It is to bring His agony and bloody sweat, His cross and passion, and His precious death, home to our memories and hearts.

3. ***The bread and wine are emblematical also of the end and design of our Lord's incarnation and death.*** "For you." Compare exhortation in communion service, "To the end you should always remember." It speaks of Christ's work. Is. liii. 5. Remember His dying cry, John xix. 30. What was finished? The work of atonement which Christ had undertaken. So the Apostle speaks, Heb. ix. 26; x. 11, 12. In like manner our church service, "Who hath made there, by His one oblation of Himself once offered, &c."

"For ever and for ever, Thou did'st finish
The work thy Father gav'st Thee to fulfil;

Man can add nothing, nor can ought diminish,
That work remains consummate, perfect, still.
Glorious salvation! full, eternal, free,
This was the work wrought out by Him for me."

Now let us view the Lord's supper—

II. As a memorial. The ancient Jewish ordinance of the Passover, and the Lord's supper, both shadows of Christ, but one before He came keeping up expectation, the other after He is gone, keeping up remembrance of His coming, and what He brought, as well as looking forward "till He come" again. In remembrance, not simply of our Lord Himself, but, as set forth in these emblems of His humiliation, suffering, death. And why an ordinance to keep these things in remembrance?

1. *Because Christ does not forget them.* Rev. i. 17, 18; v. 6. He woul have us sympathise with Him in His joy. But more especially,

2. *Because it is of such deep importance that we should remember Christ.* There are some things which benefit us whether we think of them or not,—sun and rain for instance. Not so with our dying Lord. He must be thought of, or His dying love will be of little avail. Looking at food will not nourish, it must be eaten; so Christ must be fed on by habitual remembrance and lively faith. John vi. 47—58. So with our spiritual growth, comfort, strength; all flow from the cross, and that cross must live in our memories and hearts or all will languish.

3. *Because we are liable to forget.* We may think sometimes we never can forget such love, but if we do we have but little knowledge of our own hearts. It is life to us to remember, death to forget.

In closing, carry away this thought. Before you can *remember* Christ, you must first *know* Him. There can be no remembrance without previous acquaintance. Do you then know Him as your Saviour? If you do, you have first felt the burden of sin, the Holy Spirit has convinced you of your own personal guilt, and then led you in penitence and faith to Jesus. If it be so, do not wait to become more established christians before you come to the table of the Lord. This is as if an invalid should say, "When I am stronger, I will take the strengthening medicine my physician has sent me." No: if on self-examination you can honestly feel that however feebly, yet you *do repent, believe, obey*, then "draw near with faith and take this holy sacrament to your comfort."

Dora.

[This Lesson follows in great measure the line of thought pursued in one of the Rev. C. BRADLEY'S "Sacramental Sermons," but as it was much valued by the class to which it was given, consisting of young women from 16 to 30 years of age, the writer thought it might possibly be of some service to a teacher who might not have such a help at hand.]

NOTES OF LESSONS ON THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE, FOR SENIOR CLASSES.

The Book of Zephaniah.

Zephaniah gives, in the first verse of this Book, all that is known of his personal history. By commencing his prophecy with denunciations against "the remnant of Baal," and "them which worshipped the hosts of heaven," it is evident that he wrote before the idolatrous priests were extirpated by the zeal of Josiah, and therefore it is probable that he prophesied before the reformation effected by that monarch in the eighteenth year of his reign (A.M. 3392) and a little before Jeremiah entered upon his ministry (See 2 Kings xxii.—xxiii.)

This Book contains partly threatenings and partly consolation,—denouncing the wrath of God against Judah for idolatry and apostacy, and against the nations which assisted in oppressing the Jews; but comforting the penitent and faithful by the promise that God will finally restore His Church to His favour and blessing.

In the first discourse (chap. i.) the people of Judah are warned of the severe judgments about to fall upon them, and an exhortation, very touching and powerful, is given to them in chap. ii. 1—3, to seek betimes a hiding place from the fierce anger of the Lord. Next are specific predictions of the fall of the four chief cities of the Philistines. Comparing chap. ii. 4 of this prophecy with Amos i. 6—8, and Zech. ix. 5—7, and with the statements of modern travellers, we find how literally true is each word used by these divinely inspired men. Thus Gaza was to be bereaved of her king, and her palaces forsaken, and now ruins of white marble are mingled with the huts of its present inhabitants; Askelon and Ashdod were to be a desolation, and now none are found to be dwelling in them; Ekron was to "be rooted up," and its very site is unknown,—although all these cities were flourishing and populous for many hundred years after these prophecies were delivered. Other enemies of the Jews share the same fate with the Philistines (chap. ii. 4—7), for judgments are pronounced against Moab and Ammon, Ethiopia and Assyria—the desolation of Nineveh being described with great force and accuracy (chap. ii. 5—15). So surely will the enemies of God's people be overthrown (Ps. lx. 12).

The third discourse, in the last chapter, is addressed to Jerusalem, pointing out her many aggravated transgressions and her approaching captivity; but encouraging the faithful to wait patiently for the time of restoration and the ultimate prosperity of God's people, gathered from all lands, under Messiah's rule.

Here, as elsewhere in the books of the prophets, we are taught to trace God's Providence in all His dealings with His people (Ps. lxxv. 6, 7); to see the ruinous nature of sin (Ps. cvii. 33, 34); the righteous government of God (Deut. xxxii. 4), and His gracious purposes towards His Church (Isaiah xxvii. 3); for as He only afflicts men to chasten and purify them (Isaiah xlviii. 10), so He removes their affliction when they return to Him (Ps. xxxiv. 19).

The Book of Haggai.

This short Book is the first of the prophecies delivered to the Jews after their return from the captivity, and is supposed to be dated about B.C. 520, at the time when the work of re-building the Temple had been delayed and interrupted for fourteen years, in consequence of the intrigues of the Samaritans, and others who prejudiced the minds of the Persian monarch against the Jews, and thus endeavoured to defeat the edict of Cyrus. (See Ezra iv.—vi., and Nehemiah.)

Under these circumstances Haggai (supposed to have been born at Babylon during the captivity, and to have returned to Judæa with Zerubbabel) was appointed to encourage and exhort his brethren to continue and complete the building. The hindrances to it had been removed by Darius Hystaspes having renewed, in the second year of his reign, the permission formerly granted by Cyrus; but the Jews had in the interval grown indifferent about it, and while dwelling in goodly houses of their own, left the house of God unfinished (i. 1—5). Unfruitful seasons were sent to indicate God's displeasure at their conduct (i. 6—11), but, when thus exhorted by the prophet, Zerubbabel, and Joshua, the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the remnant of the people, were stirred up to resume the task (i. 12—15).

The meanness of the structure, as compared with the first Temple, saddened the hearts of those who had beheld the former building in all its beauty; and for the comfort of these, the prophet was shortly afterwards commissioned by God to declare the greater glory of the second temple by the coming of Messiah (chap. ii. 1—9). The clouded and symbolical representation of the Divine Majesty which overshadowed the mercy-seat in the old Temple, only prefigured the Incarnate presence of the Son of God Himself in that then to be built (Col. ii. 9), when the Prince of Peace appeared in its courts (chap. ii. 9, compared with Ephes. ii. 14).

As the building of the Temple was resumed, the prophet was instructed, within four months of his first exhortation, yet further to encourage those engaged in it by immediate tokens of the Divine favour, as well as of future privileges. Hitherto, while the work had been suspended, the harvests had been scanty; the following ones were to be abundantly fruitful (chap. ii. 10—19). Thus, too, will it be found in all cases, that nothing is lost to us of what we give to God, of time or means, or strength, but that He requites our unworthy services and offerings by a larger gift of blessing (Mal. iii. 10, 11; Prov. iii. 9, 10).

As a further encouragement for the people to proceed in their labour (which was completed five years afterwards), Haggai was appointed at the same time to deliver a second prophecy respecting the kingdom of Christ, typically described under the name of Zerubbabel, his chosen servant (chap. ii. 20—23). The events immediately preceding and following the abode of Christ upon earth, the subversion of the Persian and Grecian monarchies, and the overthrow of Jerusalem, may be foreshadowed in these words, but their full meaning will only be realized when the kingdoms of the world become subject to the Messiah (Daniel ii. 44; Rev. xi. 15).

He who gave the glory to the second Temple by His presence, now dwells in the hearts of His faithful people (John xiv. 20, 23; Rom. viii. 9). "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh," Heb. xii. 25—28.

The Book of Zechariah.

This Prophet was contemporary with Haggai, beginning his labours about two months after him. He describes himself as the son of Berechiah, and he was one of those who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel, when a very young man (ii. 4.). The first eight chapters contain the prophecies delivered in the second and fourth years of the reign of Darius (B.C. 520). The remainder of the book appears to have been composed at a later period of the prophet's life, when the temple was completed, but when the priests and the people had fallen away from their allegiance to God. By denouncing their unfaithfulness he excited popular animosity, and was murdered (as his namesake the son of Jehoiada had been some three hundred years before) between the porch and the altar, in the court of the priests:—see our Lord's reference to his death in Matt. xxiii. 35.

The first part of the book relates to events occurring at the time in which the prophet lived. A general exhortation to repentance is followed by several visions designed to stimulate the people at Jerusalem to a vigorous prosecution of the work of rebuilding the temple, and restoring the ordinances of religion. The visions of the horses and of the four horns and four carpenters, signified the ministers of God's Providence, and the strength to be given to those who would overcome the disturbers of the work (chap. i.). The vision of the measuring line predicts the rebuilding of the city according to its former extent, and is accompanied by promises of security and protection, prosperity and increase (chap. ii). Under the type of Joshua the high priest arrayed in new robes, Zechariah predicts the restoration of the temple service, and sets forth the glory of Christ, the great high priest, and the chief corner-stone of His Church (chap. iii.). He conveys an intimation of the success of Jerubbabel in rebuilding the temple in the vision of the golden candlestick and two olive trees in chap. iv. All these visions were consoling and encouraging; but lest the people should grow presumptuous and careless, others follow, of a flying roll and an ephah, indicating future judgments for sin (chap. v.), mingled with predictions of the overthrow of the four great empires (chap. vi. 1—8) and with the vision of the crowns (verse 9—15) which first declared the re-establishment of the Jewish polity, but eventually the kingdom and priesthood of Christ. In the seventh and eighth chapters, an enquiry about certain fasts leads the prophet to inculcate the weightier matters of the law, and to urge the Jews to complete the work to which he had incited them. The rest of the book is occupied with future events—relating to the conquests of Alexander the great (ix. 1—7), the victories and restoration of the Jews (x. 1—12), the destruction of the temple, and the rejection of Christ by the people (chap. xi.), their subsequent grief for the crucifixion of the Messiah by their ancestors (xii. 10—14), and their final conversion (xiii. 1—6).

Mingled with these subjects and many predictions of the success of the Gospel are specific allusions to circumstances in our Lord's life, and expressions in regard to his nature, of great value as evidences of the guidance of the Divine Spirit in prophecy. Thus the divinity of Christ is alluded to in chap. ii. 10 (see John is 14): our Lord's riding into Jerusalem in chap. ix. 9; (see Matt. xxi. 2—9): His betrayal for money and the use made of it in chap. xi. 12, 13; (see Matt. xxvi 15; xxvii. 3—10): the piercing of his side in chap. xii. 10 (see John xix. 34—37): and the means of atonement, in chap. xiii. 1, 7: (see 1 John i. 7; John x. 30).

We learn from this book the duty of seeking the welfare and promoting the extension of the spiritual temple, the Church of Christ; and are taught by it to value the blessings of the Gospel dispensation—especially the gift of a Saviour, chap. xiii. 1, and the outpouring of the Spirit of grace, chap xii. 10.

The Book of Malachi.

After Zechariah, more than a hundred years elapsed before another and the last of the prophets of the old dispensation was raised up. Malachi lived when the temple had been rebuilt, and its worship re-established (chap. i, 7, 10, 12, iii., 10) and his ministry coincided with or succeeded that of Nehemiah, the last of the Old Testament historians.—(See Neh. xiii. 10, 11, 23—31). Various dates are assigned to this Book in different chronologies, varying from B.C. 436 to B.C. 420.

The special object of Malachi was to reprove the Jews, after the special favours God had bestowed upon them, for not showing due reverence to Him (chap. i. 1–10), especially denouncing the sins both of priests and people in their disrespect of God in their sacrifices, and their unlawful intermarriages (chap. i. 11—14; ii.) He then announces the coming of Christ, the Messenger of the Covenant, and His forerunner John the Baptist, to purify the sons of Levi (chap. iii. 1—6); reproves the Jews for rebellion, sacrilege, and gross impiety (verses 7—15); describes the conduct, blessedness, and end of the godly, and the judgment of the wicked (chap. iii. 16—18; iv. 1—3); and, finally, enjoins the strict observance of the law till the harbinger of the Sun of righteousness should appear in the spirit and power of Elijah, to proclaim the Messiah, and the dawn of a new and everlasting dispensation (iv. 4—6). Thus, as the last prophet of the Mosaic dispensation, Malachi resigned the office to the personal precursor of Christ, and the oracle by which God's people had been taught, and warned, and comforted, during successive generations, spoke its last words in the language of the Gospel.

Four hundred years elapsed before the predictions of the prophet were verified. At the time when he spoke the Jews were subject to the Persian rule, and so continued till that power was overthrown by Alexander the Great, B.C. 330. After his death, and on the division of his kingdom, many thousands of the chosen people were carried into Egypt by Ptolemy, B.C. 320, and the whole nation became subject to him and his successors. During the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus which commenced in B.C. 284, the Greek version of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint, was made, and tended greatly to disseminate the knowledge of the ancient Scriptures, and to confirm their authenticity. The Jews were afterwards subject to the Syrian monarchy, and were so violently persecuted by Antiochus Epiphanes (B.C. 168) as to be completely deprived of their civil and religious liberties for three years and a half. This monarch, having desecrated the Temple by dedicating it to Jupiter Olympus, and by erecting his statue on the altar of burnt offering, and having declared his intention of exterminating the religion of the Jews, the righteous indignation of the people was roused to resistance, mainly by the piety and courage of Mattathias and his descendants, the family of the Maccabees (B.C. 165). Under these princes the Jews enjoyed prosperity and freedom, but the subsequent decline of Egypt and Syria so strengthened the Roman empire as to induce Pompey to demand the submission of the Jews to the arms of Rome (B.C. 63). From that time Judæa was under tribute to the Roman power, but governed by the Maccabæan princes, until the last of that family was deposed (B.C. 37) by Herod the Great, who, though of Jewish origin, was an Idumæan by birth. He was appointed king of the Jews by the Roman emperor, and, during his long reign, greatly diminished the civil power of the high priests. Having attempted to murder the infant Saviour, he soon afterwards died most miserably. Under the government of his sons Judæa became a Roman province, and the sceptre departed from Judah, for Shiloh was come. (Gen. xlix. 10).

With the Law and the Prophets before them, we know the Jews rejected the Messiah when He came, and heeded not His messenger. He will come again to judgment without a warning of His approach. "Watch therefore." (Matt. xxiv. 42,44.)

The Gospel according to St. Matthew.

Our course of lessons has now brought us to the New Testament, that later and final revelation of the Divine purposes which, though declared from the beginning, and foreshadowed by the prophets, were only perfectly fulfilled by the Son of God.

Four accounts are given us of the life and death, the words and works of the Redeemer,—not recording *all* the transactions of that wondrous history (see John xxi. 25), but only such a selection as, taught by the Divine Spirit, the Apostles and Evangelists knew would most clearly convey a just idea of His person and teaching. The writers of the Gospels were mostly constant attendants upon our Lord during His ministry, and received His own private explanation of that which, being spoken in parables, they did not clearly understand (Mark iv. 34). After His resurrection, He not only showed Himself to them, but spoke to them of "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts i. 3); and subsequently sent to them that Guide, by whom they were taught the truth, and all that He had spoken was brought to their remembrance (John xiv. 26, xvi. 13, 14).

Thus qualified by natural opportunities, and by Divine inspiration, the Evangelists have handed down to us a fourfold record of the life of our blessed Lord,—each of them writing of the things he knew independently of the others; yet all corroborating the facts of the history, even by their seeming discrepancies, and thus forming a priceless treasury of glad tidings to the world.

Of these Gospels, that by Matthew is regarded as having been the first composed. The exact date it bears is unknown,—the earliest assigned being A.D. 37, the latest A.D. 61; the former being probably the nearer to the true period, as it was evidently written for the use of the Christians in Palestine, and originally in the Hebrew dialect then spoken, although subsequently translated into Greek. Matthew, its author, called also Levi, was a Jew, though employed as a tax-gatherer under the Romans, near the Lake of Gennesareth, and was so occupied when called to be an Apostle. He mentions himself by the opprobrious title of "publican" (Matt. x. 3), and only very briefly records his conversion (chap. ix. 9).

The chief outlines of this Gospel are those of the life of our Lord Himself, beginning with His genealogy from Abraham, and the events of His infancy (chap. i. ii.); the preparation for His public ministry, including His baptism and temptation (chap. iii. iv.); His discourses and miracles, particularly in Galilee (iv.—xx.); and the transactions immediately connected with His last sufferings, death, and resurrection (xx.—xxviii.). Several important points are recorded by St. Matthew not found in the other Evangelists, as the visit of the eastern Magi; the flight of our Saviour into Egypt; the slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem; the parable of the ten virgins; the dream of Pilate's wife; the resurrection of many saints at the crucifixion; and the bribing of the Roman guard over the tomb of our Lord.

In St. Matthew's narrative more allusions will be found to Jewish customs, and to places in Palestine as well-known to those addressed, than in any other Gospel; and he seems studiously to record such circumstances as would conciliate the unbelieving and strengthen the faith of the converted Jews. The lineage of our Lord is traced from Abraham and David; His birth is described as taking place in that city where the Messiah was to be born; and the old prophecies are frequently shown to find their fulfilment in the events of our Lord's life. This Gospel is especially valuable for the full account it contains of our Lord's discourses, especially the sermon on the mount, the charge to the apostles, the illustrations of the nature of His kingdom, and the prophetic discourse on Mount Olivet.

The end of all the Gospels is to show us Jesus Christ as the only Saviour and exemplar. Have we accepted His redemption? And do we try to follow His steps?

The Gospel according to St. Mark.

The writer of this Gospel is generally supposed to be the same with John, surnamed Mark, who was the nephew, or "sister's son to Barnabas" (Col iv. 10), and the son of Mary, a pious convert at Jerusalem (Acts xii. 12). After he embraced the faith, he became a constant companion of the Apostle Peter, through whom he is supposed to have been converted (see 1 Peter v. 13), although at first he accompanied St. Paul in his travels (Acts xiii. 5). His intimate connection with St. Peter, his having listened for years to his public discourses and private conversation, and his long residence with him at Rome, qualified him to write under his superintendence, and by the revelation of the Holy Ghost, for the use of the Christians resident in that city, an abstract of the Gospel as it was known to and taught by the Apostle. This Gospel is stated to have been written in Greek, and published by St. Peter's authority about the year 60.

Being designed especially for the use of the Gentile converts at Rome, St. Mark avoids all those topics which were peculiarly adapted to the condition of the Jewish people. Thus he omits the genealogy and birth of our Lord, simply declaring the book to be "the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God;" and only in special cases does he quote from the ancient prophecies, or allude to Jewish customs;—in the latter case he introduces explanations which would be necessary to Gentiles at Rome, but not to Jews in Palestine (see i. 5; vii. 2, 11; xv. 42). In support of the belief that he wrote under the direction of St. Peter, it has been observed that many things, honourable to that Apostle, are omitted by St. Mark, which are recorded by the other Evangelists, although his weaknesses and failings, and the reproofs he received from His Master, are all carefully detailed (compare Mark viii. 29 with Matt. xvi. 17; see also Mark viii. 33; xiv. 31—71).

Although, in the sixteen chapters of this Gospel, the general plan of that by St. Matthew is followed, yet the events are recorded generally more briefly and concisely, and some of our Lord's discourses there fully detailed (as, for instance, the Sermon on the Mount), are altogether omitted. In some cases, however, St. Mark adds further particulars, as in the cure of the paralytic (compare Mark ii. 3—12 with Matt. ix. 2), and the miracle among the Gadarenes (compare Mark v. 1—20 with Matt. viii. 18). Several circumstances are briefly enumerated by St. Mark which are not found in any other Gospel, two of these being the miraculous cures recorded at the end of chap. vii., and in the middle of chap. viii., of the deaf man who had an impediment in his speech, and of the blind man at Bethsaida. The progress of the Gospel in the world, illustrated by the parable of the seed growing steadily, though unperceived (iv. 26—29), is only mentioned here; and in speaking of Simon the Cyrenian (xv. 21), St. Mark adds that he was the father of Alexander and Rufus, who, being residents at Rome, were doubtless known to those whom he addressed (see Rom. xvi. 13). From these instances, it is evident that St. Mark's Gospel is an independent testimony from the others, to the great facts of the life and death of Jesus, and that there are some things recorded by him, apparently of little moment, which yet are necessary to complete the sacred narrative in some of its parts, and to make these harmonise into one perfect whole.

The solemn last words spoken by our Lord, as here recorded (xvi. 15, 16), set before us the terms of life or death. Unless a man has faith he must be lost for ever. Is the Gospel "tidings of great joy" to us?

The Gospel according to St. Luke.

As the record furnished by Mark was regarded as the Gospel of St. Peter because written under his supervision, so that of St. Luke has been considered to be the record of what was preached by St. Paul, since, from all we know of its writer, he was long the companion of that Apostle. He is first mentioned in his own history (Acts xvi. 10, 11), and from the same book we gather that for many years he followed St. Paul in all his labours and sufferings (see Acts xvi. 12; xx. 1—6; xxvii. 1, 2; xxviii. 13—16). That Apostle speaks of him (Col. iv. 14) as "the beloved physician," and again in 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philemon 24. Luke, we know, wrote St. Paul's life in the Acts down to his imprisonment at Rome, and from the introduction to that book it is evident that it was written *after* this Gospel (Acts i. 1); which we, therefore, conclude was completed a few years before the end of St. Paul's life, probably about A.D. 60.

St. Luke does not profess to have been an eye-witness of the events which he records (see chap. i. 1, 2); it is evident, therefore, that he was not one of the seventy disciples, but probably a native of Antioch, a Jewish proselyte, who had carefully authenticated all that he heard from the Apostles, and, while they were living, arranged in order what he had learnt from them. This Gospel was published during the lives of Peter, Paul, and John, and was then received as of sacred authority, and has ever since been regarded as Divinely inspired.

It is supposed to have been written for the use of Gentile converts in Greece, the Evangelist having inserted many explanations concerning the Scribes and Pharisees, and other matters relating to the Jews, which would have been unnecessary, if addressing converts from Judaism. It is dedicated to Theophilus, a Greek or Roman convert, with whom St. Luke was acquainted, and it would appear that inaccurate and defective accounts were then in existence, which led the Evangelist to compile this authenticated record of our Lord's life.

In its style it is more varied and pure than any of the other Gospels, and hence St. Luke is considered to have possessed more learning and knowledge of Greek than the other Evangelists. It has been remarked, also, that his descriptions of diseases are more accurate and circumstantial, and have more of technical correctness than those given by the writers of the other Gospels, which seems to confirm his identity as the "beloved physician."

The narrative given in this Gospel is more copious than in any of the others, and while passing by many particulars mentioned by Matthew and Mark, who wrote before him, St. Luke adds many fresh circumstances in the life of our Lord and several more discourses and parables, besides giving a distinct genealogy from that of St. Matthew, tracing His descent, through Mary, upward, by David and Abraham, to Adam, the immediate "son of God" by creation.

The chief points in St. Luke's Gospel, which are not found in the others, are—the birth of John the Baptist; the Roman census in Judæa; the circumstances attending Christ's birth at Bethlehem; the vision granted to the shepherds; the early testimony of Simeon and Anna; Christ's conversation with the doctors in the temple, when He was twelve years old; the parables of the good Samaritan, the prodigal son, the unjust steward, the barren fig tree, the rich fool, Dives and Lazarus, the wicked judge, and the Publican and Pharisee; the cure of the woman bowed down by illness eighteen years; the cleansing of the ten lepers; the restoration to life of the son of a widow at Nain; the account of Zacchæus, and of the penitent thief, and the particulars of the journey to Emmaus.

So much more is thus revealed to us of the design of mercy in the acts and words of our Lord, that we may well bless God for this added record of His love.

The Gospel according to St. John.

Yet another record was needed, besides those already given, that all succeeding generations might know accurately the nature and character of the Divine Founder of the Christian Faith. The three preceding Evangelists had detailed the events connected with our Lord's birth, and His public life among the Jews, and had minutely described the chief circumstances of His crucifixion and death, and His subsequent resurrection and ascension: but these were principally only external evidences of the Divine mission of the Saviour. A long interval elapsed before this fourth Gospel was set forth under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost,—a period in which Jerusalem had been besieged and destroyed, the faith of the cross had spread around, persecution had decimated the believers, and heresy respecting the Divine nature of our Lord had crept into the infant Church.

It was reserved for the beloved disciple, who had been called to follow the Lord, when a young and simple fisherman of Galilee, who had been his attendant throughout his ministry, and had been selected to witness, (with Peter and James his brother) special miracles, the transfiguration, and the agony of Gethsemane;—who was the only one of the Apostles at the cross, and had the especial privilege of receiving the mother of the Lord into his own home,—who was the first to believe the resurrection of the Lord, and the one who outlived all the Apostles, and was the chosen instrument, from dreary Patmos, of recording what things are to happen till time shall be no longer;—it was for this Apostle, thirty years after the other Gospels had been published, to supplement them all by another record—a spiritual biography—an account not so much of the outward life as of the inward being of the Master he loved, especially preserving those words which fell from His lips declaring His own nature as the Son of God from all eternity, and yet united mystically to His people.

The date of this Gospel is generally stated as A.D. 97, after St. John's return from Patmos to Ephesus. From the manner in which Jewish customs, ceremonies and names are described and explained, it is evident the book was designed for Gentile readers to whom the rites and festivals of the Jews were comparatively unknown, especially after the destruction of Jerusalem. It contains no general outline of the events of our Lord's life—hence it is inferred that St. John presupposes his readers to be acquainted with the other three Gospels: for he gives no account of our Saviour's nativity, baptism, and temptation, of the appointment of the twelve Apostles, or of the institution of the two sacraments. On the other hand, he has recorded many important facts not mentioned by the other Evangelists, and some of the last and most precious words of the Saviour. Thus he alone describes Christ turning water into wine: his healing the nobleman's son, the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda, and the blind man at the pool of Siloam, and the raising of Lazarus from the dead, discourses with Nicodemus; His with the Samaritan woman, with the Pharisees concerning his Divinity, with the people at Capernaum concerning Himself as the bread of life, and with His disciples before He suffered; His intercessory prayer; and after His resurrection His appearance to the disciples at Tiberias, and His charge to Peter.

The opening verses of this Gospel indicate its purpose—to declare the Divinity of Jesus Christ. This truth shines forth in every page, and if the language be less that of the learned than that of the other Gospels (as might be expected from the Apostle's early life), the simplicity with which he declares the sublimest truths, and his affection, zeal, and veneration for His Divine Master have combined to render this the most precious of the records respecting Him, who is revealed to us as the Son of God, "that believing we might have life through His name."

The Acts of the Apostles.

The careful reader of the Gospels will not fail to observe a very striking difference between the mode and character of the teaching of our Lord and that of His Apostles, as recorded in their Epistles, or as shown in this record of their doings. In the beginning of our Lord's ministry He, like His forerunner, simply preached the doctrine of repentance; He followed this up by discourses showing the necessity for a spiritual interpretation of the law; but it was only in His final addresses to His disciples that He reveals to them the great doctrine of His atonement, and the necessity of sanctification by the Holy Spirit. In His life *He* was rather the subject of the Gospel than the preacher of it; leaving it to His Apostles when illuminated by the Holy Ghost to be the interpreter to the world of the plan of salvation accomplished by Him.

The first verses of this Book show that it was written by St. Luke, for the purpose of supplementing the Gospel narrative, and of recording what the Apostles did (after the ascension of our Lord, and the descent of the Holy Ghost, according to His promise), in founding and establishing the Church. The writer, we know, was the frequent companion of St. Paul in his journeyings (Acts xvi., xx., xxvii., xxviii.; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Col. iv. 14); and was thus peculiarly qualified to furnish an account of the labours of that Apostle in carrying the Gospel to the Pagan world. The commission to St. Peter to open the doors of the Christian Church both to Jews and Gentiles, is another special point recorded by him—the labours of the other Apostles being only occasionally mentioned; and as the whole narrative is closed in the second year of the residence of St. Paul at Rome, it is supposed to have been written not later than A.D. 62. As no account is given of the labours of the rest of the Apostles elsewhere than in Judæa, and only the death of James is recorded (Acts xii. 2), it is evident that St. Luke's purpose was not to give a complete history of the Christian Church, but to show the establishment of the new dispensation, by the admission of Jews and Gentiles to the redemption universally offered to all men in Christ Jesus.

The period embraced in this Book is one of about thirty years; but it does not describe all that took place during that time, for it gives no account of the Church at Jerusalem after St. Paul's conversion; or of the progress of Christianity in Egypt and Babylon (1 Peter v. 13); of the foundation of the Roman Church; or of St. Paul's travels in Arabia (Gal. i. 17); or of many of his journeyings and shipwrecks (2 Cor. xi. 25). The principal facts recorded are—the Ascension of our Lord; the choice of Matthias to be an Apostle in the room of the traitor; the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost; the preaching, miracles, and sufferings of the Apostles at Jerusalem; the death of Stephen, the first martyr, and the dispersion of the Christians; the preaching of the Gospel in Palestine, and especially in Samaria; the conversion of St. Paul; the call of Cornelius, the first Gentile convert; the persecution of the Christians by Herod Agrippa; the preaching of Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles; the decrees made in Jerusalem respecting circumcision and the ceremonial law of the Jews, in reference to Gentile converts; and the detailed history of the labours of St. Paul until the second year of his residence at Rome.

In this narrative we have the character and conduct of the first Christians strikingly exemplified; and the work of the Holy Ghost, as the source of strength to the Apostles, and the giver of new life and Divine light and joy to the converts to the Gospel, is set before us for our own guidance in seeking His quickening and sanctifying influences, if we would ourselves be partakers of the redemption purchased for us.

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans.

The remaining Books of the New Testament, with the exception of the last, consist of *Epistles* or letters, addressed by the Apostles to the various Churches, or to individual members of the Christian brotherhood. In these letters the doctrines taught by our Lord are developed and enforced, and vindicated against the objections raised by those who thus early propagated errors, either arising from Jewish prejudice, or the endeavour to reconcile the Gospel with the Greek philosophy or heathen superstitions. So large a portion of the plan of salvation depended upon the death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord, and the coming of the Holy Ghost, that not till after those events, could even the disciples "bear" (John xvi. 12) or comprehend it; but when enlightened by their heavenly Teacher, they were enabled to realise and explain to the converts the fulness of the covenant of grace and the mystery of godliness.

Fourteen of the Epistles are ascribed to St. Paul, who of all the Apostles, was the most distinguished for learning zeal, energy, endurance, and a devotion to his Master, which rendered him, at all times ready to give up his life for Him who had called him from among the strictest sect of the Jews to be especially the Apostle of the Gentiles.

The Epistle to the Romans was written in Greek by an amanuensis, Tertius, chap. xvi. 22 (except the concluding benediction which, in all St. Paul's Epistles, appears, from 2 Thess. iii. 15, to have been written in his own hand), and was sent by Phœbe, a Christian matron, resident at Cenchreæ, the eastern port of Corinth. At the time it was written, A.D. 58, the Apostle was at Corinth, preparing to take the contributions from the Churches of Macedonia and Achaia to Jerusalem, chap. xv. 25—27. Paul had not then visited Rome, but he was personally acquainted with many of the Christians there (see chap. xvi.), and especially with Aquila and Priscilla, who, when Claudius in A.D. 54 banished all Jews from Rome, went to Corinth, afterwards to Ephesus, and finally returned to the capital (see Acts xviii. 2, 19). The Church at Rome consisted chiefly of Gentile converts, although, probably, originally founded by Jewish proselytes who were at Jerusalem on the great day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 10). St. Paul speaks highly of the condition of the church (Rom. i. 8), but the prejudices, both of Jews and Gentiles were not altogether absent (ch. iii. and xv.), and he therefore sought to win both parties to Christian love, and to an understanding of the truth. To do this he makes a statement of the doctrines of the Gospel in regular order; the first five chapters contain the first principles of Christianity—that as all have sinned, and none can be justified by the deeds of the law, justification is freely given to all for the sake of the perfect atonement made by Christ, the universal Redeemer. He shows that all distinction between Jews and Gentiles is abolished, and the ceremonial law abrogated—that unbelieving Jews would be excluded from the benefits of the Gospel, while believing Gentiles would be partakers of them. In chap. vi—xi. St. Paul points out the superiority of the Christian over the Jewish religion, and earnestly exhorts the Romans to abandon every species of wickedness, and to practice the duties of holiness, which are now enjoined upon higher sanctions, and enforced by more powerful motives. In the remainder of the Epistle he applies the whole subject of it by a variety of practical instructions, and exhorts to the exercise of some special virtues; excuses himself for addressing them, and commends himself to their prayers; offers many affectionate salutations, and concludes with ascribing glory to God our Saviour (chap. xii.—xvi.).

Let us treasure the chief truth taught in this Epistle—salvation in Christ alone—and take heed that, as His people, we are zealous of good works.

The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians.

We have an account of the formation of the Church at Corinth, a large and wealthy city of Greece, in Acts xviii. 1—18. St. Paul resided there eighteen months, and obtained many converts from heathenism. After he left the city, a false teacher arrived from Judæa, apparently a Sadducee, who endeavoured to alienate the converts from the doctrine taught by St. Paul, and called in question the authority of his mission: see 2 Cor. xi. 13, 22; 1 Cor. xv. 12. Hearing of these things, the Apostle sent Timothy and Erastus to Corinth, until he could revisit it himself (Acts xix. 22; 1 Cor. iv. 17: 2 Cor. i. 15). The false teachers having introduced errors and irregularities among the Corinthian Christians, 1 Cor. i. 11, 12, some of the brethren asked the advice of the Apostle in dealing with them (chaps. vii. 1; xvi. 12, 17); this was the occasion of the *first* Epistle addressed to that Church from Ephesus, in the year 56, about three years after St. Paul left Corinth.

Beginning the Epistle by expressions of affection, and thankfulness for the grace given to the Church at Corinth, he next reproves those who had caused dissension, and replies to the assertions of the false teachers (1 Cor. i.—iv.); he then reproves the brethren for allowing gross crime in one of their number for bringing actions against each other in heathen courts of law (chaps. v., vi.), for misapplying spiritual gifts, and for disorder in their public services, especially at the Holy Communion (ch. ix.—xi.). The questions submitted for his decision related to controversies as to meat offered to idols, to the law of marriage (ch. vii. viii.), and to the public exercise of spiritual gifts (ch. xii., xiv.). The existence of these disputes prompted St. Paul to explain the nature and extent of Christian love (ch. xiii.). He afterwards enumerates the arguments to be deduced as proving the certainty of the resurrection of the dead, in answer to the objections stated by the false teachers (chap. xv.), concluding by directions regarding the collections for the poor Christians of Judæa, with promises of visiting the Corinthians, and his accustomed salutations (chap. xvi.).

After writing this Epistle, St. Paul travelled into Macedonia, and met Titus the bearer of it, at Phillippi, who reported that his letter had been well received by the Corinthian Christians, many of whom had repented of their former errors; that they had excommunicated the offender against the Divine law (2 Cor. vii. 7—9); but that some of them still adhered to the false teachers, who continued to deny St. Paul's Apostolic mission, and to depreciate his influence and authority. Deeply concerned for these converts, St. Paul directed Titus to return, bearing with him the *second* Epistle. These circumstances explain its twofold tone,—of love to those who had yielded obedience to his former command, and of warning and menace to the disobedient section of the Church. First alluding to his own deliverance, and explaining the causes of his promised visit being postponed, he pardons and restores the penitent offender, dwells upon his successful labours and the proofs of his authority, shows the excellence of the doctrines of the Gospel, warns the Church against connection with unbelievers, and refers to the irregularities which prevailed (ch. i.—vii.). He next urges the Corinthians to complete their contributions for the poor brethren in Judæa (ch. viii, ix.), and then again vindicates his character as an Apostle, reluctantly contrasting his own gifts, labours, sufferings and conduct with the pretences of the false teachers. After various admonitions, he concludes with good wishes and prayers, and his own autograph benediction (ch. x.—xiii.).

The misuse of spiritual gifts, and the neglect of the opportunities given us to grow in grace, are set before us in these Epistles as making shipwreck of our faith. May we so walk in love and purity as to be partakers of that resurrection so wondrously described by the Apostle!

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians.

There is good reason to suppose that this letter was written by the Apostle about the same time as that to the Romans (*i. e.* A.D., 58), to which it bears many striking resemblances. If so, it was probably sent from Corinth, where tidings reached St. Paul of the perversion of the Galatians from the faith of the Gospel through the influence of Judaizing teachers from Jerusalem. The Galatians (or Gallo-grecians) were emigrants from Gallic tribes, who got possession of a large tract of country in Asia Minor about B.C. 240, and settled there. They were superstitious idolaters, wild and fierce in disposition, until converted to Christianity by the Apostle, who paid two visits to their country not long before this Epistle was written (Acts xvi. 6; xviii. 23). Although the Church consisted mainly of Gentiles, a portion of it, as of others, was composed of Jews by birth, among whom some Judaizing teachers assiduously laboured, to endeavour to counteract the influence of St. Paul by disparaging his apostleship, as being only one sent by the twelve, and not one of those appointed by our Lord Himself, and by insisting that the full privilege of covenant with God could only be obtained by the circumcised followers of the Mosaic Law.

No sooner did St. Paul hear of these proceedings than he wrote this letter, expressing his surprise and anger that they should so soon have been led away from the doctrine he taught them (chap. i. 6), and his grief that those whom he loved in the faith should be so ready to forsake it, and listen to the calumnies of his enemies, against whom he vindicates himself by showing that his commission as an Apostle was received from Christ Himself, and not from other Apostles (chap. i., ii.). His next object is to show the true nature of the doctrine of justification, and the way of salvation, by the sacrifice of Christ. He declares that the peculiar rites of the Mosaic Law, and particularly circumcision, were unnecessary for them, and were only designed to be temporary, and to lead to Christ: he proves that even those who lived before His advent were not justifed by the works of the law, but by faith in God's promises (chap. iii., iv.), and that, therefore, the benefit of the covenant of grace would be forfeited by subjection to the Mosaic Law, for that by the former and not the latter they had received the gifts of the Holy Ghost. A decree much to the same effect had been published by the council at Jerusalem, mentioned in Acts xv., and it is, therefore, evident that the Judaizing teachers had no authority, as they alleged, from the Apostles in Judea. Having thus shown his Divine appointment and authority, as "not a whit behind the very chiefest of the Apostles" (2 Cor. xi. 5), and refuted the charge of the false teachers that he had inconsistently compelled his companion Titus to be circumcised, although denying its importance, by showing that wherever he went he resisted the Judaizing Christians, even reproving Peter at Antioch for fearing to associate in their presence with heathen converts; and having clearly shown that the law of the Jews was subsequent to promises and prophecies which related to the Gospel, and therefore, could have no controlling effect over that dispensation of grace to which in reality it was subservient—he finally exhorts the Galatians to stand fast in the liberty with which Christ had made them free, points out the moral and spiritual nature of the Gospel (chap. v.), and concludes with several directions and precepts for the cultivation of practical holiness (chap. vi.).

Man has always been prone to think that he may be saved *partly* by his own works; but St. Paul proves that Christ alone is the all-sufficient Saviour, both from the guilt and power of sin, enabling those who believe to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord, (Gal. v. 6).

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians.

Some doubt has been raised as to the particular church to which this Epistle was addressed, from the circumstance that several of the early manuscripts leave out the name of the church altogether, and that by many early writers it is described as the Epistle to "the Laodiceans," and is regarded by them as the same as that referred to in Col. iv. 16. In explanation of this difficulty of identification it has been supposed that when Tychicus was about to take his departure from Rome for Asia Minor, bearing with him St. Paul's letter to the Colossian Church, the Apostle—then at the commencement of his first imprisonment, A.D. 61,—was desirous of strengthening the faith of the many Gentile converts who had never seen his face, but who revered and loved him; and that as these scattered Churches had so much in common, a separate copy of the same letter was sent to each, authenticated by his usual autograph benediction. Thus the Epistle would afterwards become known by the titles of the different Churches by whom it was possessed. If, however, specially intended for the Church of Ephesus, which was first planted by St. Paul, and with which he remained for three years (Acts xviii.—xx.) it would appear natural that, as in the case of the Epistle to the Romans, some special salutations would be sent to some of those personally known to him; nor would it be likely that he would speak of himself as known to them possibly only by report, or as needing credentials (chap. iii. 2—4). Yet, however this may be, this letter has always been especially prized by the universal Church, both for the importance of its teaching, and the lofty and noble thoughts expressed in it by the Apostle, and has always been acknowledged as one of the Divinely inspired Apostolic Epistles.

Its sole object appears to have been to confirm the Christians at Ephesus, or elsewhere, in the true faith and practice of the Gospel. It consists of six chapters, three of which may be considered especially as doctrinal, and three as practical. After the salutation, St. Paul thanks God for the blessings of the Gospel dispensation, and prays for a larger measure of grace and Divine light upon his hearers; then dwells upon the excellency of the Christian faith, and shows that salvation is solely to be ascribed to the grace of God; he declares the Divine purpose to be that both Gentiles and Jews should be partakers of the privileges of the Gospel; and that his own special commission was as the Apostle of the Gentiles. Desiring the Church not to be depressed on account of his own sufferings, he closes the first part of the Epistle with an affectionate prayer and a sublime doxology. The last three chapters—so dear to Christians of every age and country—enjoin unity (especially between Jewish and Gentile Christians), and recommend purity of manners, veracity, and meekness, urge the practice of charity, and forbid every species of licentiousness. The Apostle then lays down rules for the performance of the duties of domestic life,—of wives and husbands, of children and fathers, of servants and masters, resting the motive to all these duties on our relationship to Christ and the influence of the Holy Spirit. Finally, he exhorts the brethren, in the midst of the perils that surrounded them, to continue stedfast in watchfulness and prayer, and concludes the Epistle with a general benediction.

It has been noticed that no word of blame is uttered throughout this letter; and as addressed to the Christians at Ephesus, this shows how distinguished for faith and holiness the Church was at that time (chap. i. 15). From Rev. ii. 1—7 we learn how fearfully it had declined in the course of a few years; and hence we are taught the necessity of holding fast our faith, and pursuing stedfastly the practical duties of our religion.

ADDRESSES ON OUR LORD'S INVITATIONS.

II. Isaiah i. 18.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool."

Dear Children,

This "invitation" presents to our minds the wonderful and awe-inspiring idea of the King of kings, reasoning, or expostulating with His rebellious subjects. How different God's conduct in this respect, to what man's would be! To illustrate my meaning, let me remind you of the great Indian rebellion of 1857, of which most of you must have heard, when the natives of that vast country rose against and massacred the European population which they greatly outnumbered. Great excitement prevailed in this country, for each succeeding post brought news to many, of the violent death of beloved relations and friends. Our Queen could not stop to reason, her soldiers were dispatched rapidly to bring the rebels back to a sense of their duty, by teaching them our superiority over them in arms. Nor till the rebellion was put down did our Queen dare to exercise her prerogative of mercy,—for why? Mercy to the rebels would have been destruction to her helpless and unoffending subjects. But when God reasons with man, the Bible selects two of life's tenderest relations, in which to exhibit Him *entreating* His people's love, as a father pitying his children, and as a husband yearning for his wife's affection. Jer. iii. 14. How truly does Isaiah say of Him in ch. lv. 8, 9, that His ways are not our ways!

Who are the *guests*? *Sinners.*

What the *terms*? Pardon and peace.

Then the guests who are here invited, dear children, are the inhabitants of the whole world, for *all* have sinned; we find when in Noah's days God looked down from heaven "He saw that *all* flesh had corrupted his way," Genesis vi. 12; and the great Apostle of the Gentiles tells us in Rom. iii. 23, and v. 12, that "all have sinned."

How very soon rebellion against the great King began in the garden of Eden, is so well known by you all that but for wishing to speak a little on the principles involved in the first act of defiance, shown by God's creature man against His authority, I might go on to the second part of my subject.

In the simple words of Gen. iii., which describe so graphically to us the fall of Eve, we see how ready man is to sin; how much more willing to listen to the suggestions of the tempter, to "eat and die," than to hearken to the King and live. *Obedience*, dear children, I wish you to notice is a *passive* virtue, disobedience an *active* vice—our first parents were not required *to do* any act as a proof of obedience, but they were required to *abstain from* the act. Eating was the sin, and a careful consideration of God's holy law of obedience, which He afterwards gave more fully to His chosen people, before they entered into the promised land, in the commandments written on two tables of stone, will show us the full

force of the little word *not*, or *no*, which is contained in all but one of them. *Doing* or *working* shows itself in sinners, by the "works of the flesh," Gal. v. 19, 21; and the Apostle plainly points out that they which do such things shall *not* inherit God's kingdom, and cannot be the Saviour's guests. Before *sinners* can become *guests*, they must accept the *terms* of the *invitation*, viz., pardon and peace.

Sin, dear children, rises up as an impassable barrier between the creature and the Creator, and the pardon and peace here offered, are contained in the promise, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

There is of necessity a sharp and vivid contrast contained in these words, in order to enable us in some measure to understand the greatness of the change which must pass upon a sinner before he can become a guest. You are all of you familiar with the appearance of snow, how in winter it covers the earth like a mantle, showing by its unsullied purity its heavenly origin; and since it is much less common in Judæa than with us, and lies a much shorter time, no wonder it is much more admired. The pure heaven-born snow is a most fit illustration of regenerate man; *scarlet* really means *double-dyed*, and we learn that a sinner, though once double-dyed with guilt, can through grace alone be changed into a white-robed guest, fit for the marriage supper of the Lamb. The repetition of the promise is in strict accordance with the Hebraic method of asseveration or assurance, hence the use of the word *crimson*, which has the same meaning as scarlet. Wool is *white* like snow, but it has also another property, *softness*. Here we realise the same promise given us under another figure in Ezek. xi. 19. To change the stony heart into one of flesh requires the same miraculous power as making scarlet white, or crimson like wool. *Peace* is the result of *pardon*. To the pardoned sinner whilst in the world is *tribulation*, in *Me*, says the Saviour, is Peace God, dear children, is emphatically called in the Bible *the God of peace* Rom. xv. 33; 1 Thes. v. 23; Heb. xiii. 20; in Phil. iv. 7, this blessed gift of His is described as "passing understanding," and in John xiv. 27, as *never* being taken away.

We now come to man's part in the invitation:—

1st. The preparation for it.

2nd. The answer to it.

Here again God's pity is shown, for He *prepares* us to accept it; and do you ask how, dear children?—by making us feel how greatly we have sinned, and how utterly lost and undone we are in consequence, and to show us that without His help our sin-dyed souls cannot be washed white. He came *cleansing the lepers*.

The fearful disease of *leprosy*, which was one of the most dreadful scourges under which the nations of the east suffered, is throughout the Bible frequently mentioned as a type of sin. In all hot countries this malady is peculiarly contagious, and the unhappy persons afflicted with it, were (especially amongst the Jews) shunned, for as they believed it incurable by human agency, 2 Kings v. 7, so also they believed its infliction an immediate and distinctive mark of Divine anger. Num. xii. 9—13; 2 Kings v. 27; 2 Chron. xxvi. 16—21.

But, dear children, if the sending this terrible plague upon an individual may be regarded as an expression of God's wrath, observe how the sacrificial ceremonies appointed for its cleansing point clearly, though typically, to His saving grace through His Son's atonement. The ceremonies to be observed at the leper's cleansing, and their typical meaning may have been thoroughly explained to you before, yet I feel I must in as few words as

ossible go over them again. In Lev. iv., the rites to be observed are stated, "The *two* birds, alive and clean" were requisite, because no *one* living creature could be used to show us Christ's twofold nature (human and divine). One bird killed in an *earthen* vessel over running-water—the *man* Christ Jesus—the *sacrifice* for sin. The *scarlet* (our guilt) is well placed between the *cedar wood*, the type of our Saviour's *firmness* (or resolution), and the *hyssop*, typical of the *cleansing virtue* of His bitter sufferings. The running or *living* water over which the bird was killed, points us to the *purifying influence* of the Holy Spirit; and the *living bird* dipped in the blood of the slain, points us to Him who *liveth*, and was dead, but is now *alive for evermore*. Clear and beautiful are the closing rites for the leper's cleansing; born of all his *hair*, to show he has done with *earthly glory*, he *washes;*—no baptismal regeneration is implied by this act any more than in the baptism of John the Baptist, which is specially called that of *repentance*; and as such distinguished from the *spiritual* baptism of the Holy Ghost, which the Saviour alone can bestow. In Matt. iii. 11, we are clearly shown that "the outward and visible sign" does not necessarily involve "the inward and spiritual grace." With the mint of all former corruption passed away, the leper stands before the priest, who first touches with some of the *blood* of the *trespass offering* the tip of the *right ear*, the *thumb* of the *right hand*, the *great toe* of the *right foot*, and then anoints the same members with some of the oil (a log of oil was about twelve gallons of our measure): to show us, dear children, that these our members *justified* by the Redeemer's blood, and *sanctified* by the *anointing* of the Holy Spirit are to be dedicated to God's service. Whom He justifies them He also sanctifies. Our ears ought to be opened for the whispers of "His still small voice,"—our hands should be strong in His service,—and our feet running with alacrity the strait and narrow road. We are all sinners, dear children, and therefore in God's sight as unclean as were the lepers.

Would you know the *answer* to the invitation, learn it from the poor leper in the Gospel—"Lord, if Thou wilt, *Thou* canst make me clean;" and to you He still will say, "*I will*, be thou clean." How blessed was the Saviour's *touch*, imparting healing; and compare this healing with that of Naaman, in 2 Kings v., Elisha dared not *touch*. Sin had no power to defile the Son of God.

Dear children, Pharisees may murmur, and scribes may scoff, because "this Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them," Luke xv. 2; xix. 7; but we who feel our need of Him may rejoice in the thought that "He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance," and take comfort to ourselves, that as pardoned sinners we may humbly trust in His own day to be His *guests* at the marriage supper of the Lamb; and how *blessed* shall we then be! Rev. xix. 9.

Will you not hasten, dear children, to accept an invitation given by the *Friend of sinners!*

S. B.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES ON THE INVITATIONS.

III.—The Dead are Raised.

"Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Ezekiel xxxiii. 11.

Dear Children,

Death is a solemn thing, and there are but few persons who do not shudder at the thought of a time coming when they must die. God first pronounced this punishment as the penalty of man's disobedience; and the curse which our *first* parents thus entailed upon the whole race of mankind weighed heavily on all, till Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, came; and in paying the penalty for us, became Himself the resurrection and the life to as many as believed on His name.

I.—*The guests*, or those who are here addressed, are those whom the Apostle, in Eph. ii. 1, justly calls dead in trespasses and sins; and, in considering this subject, we shall find the death of the body a most apt illustration of the death of the soul. Those among you who may have seen a dead body will follow me readily, as I endeavour to point out some of its leading characteristics. These are threefold:—

1.—*Coldness.*
2.—*Stiffness.*
3.—*Putrefaction.*

1.—*Coldness.*—Sin, dear children, chills and benumbs all man's best feelings; and in Rev. iii. 15, 16, God tells us how greatly He dislikes this state.

2.—*Stiffness.* This, in the soul, is *obstinacy*; and to this failing, with which God frequently upbraids His chosen people, He expresses great aversion, Exodus xxxii. 9; xxxiv. 9; Deut. x. 16; 2 Chron. xxx. 8; Acts vii. 51; and the ending scenes of Pharoah's and Zedekiah's lives are warnings to us of the folly of repeated acts of obstinacy; so the wise men tells us in Prov. xxix. 1.

3.—*Putrefaction.* When death has once marked a man for its own, no human power can arrest its progress; and the coldness and stiffness of the corpse are soon forsaken in the last sad loathsome stage; and in this fatal *onward*, yet *downward* progress, death and sin closely resemble each other. It is because we cannot remain stationary in sin, that, in Ps. i. 1, we are warned against its *first* steps. Dear children, never mind being laughed at by some wicked companion, because you are "afraid" to do wrong. Solomon, in Prov. xxviii. 14, has written a verse for your special comfort.

II.—*The terms of the invitation.* Life. How full of meaning is this word! The Bible tells us life is blessing; and long life, even in this world, is one of God's promises—as in the fifth commandment, and Prov. iii. 16. God has no pleasure in death; nor can we doubt when we read in the first chapter of Genesis the account of the creation, and reflect on the delight and satisfaction with which He saw, and rested from the life-giving work of the six days, that He would rather the sinner should "turn from his wickedness and live," Ezek. xviii. 23. St. Paul tells us plainly that man brings death upon himself, Rom. xi. 23, for God, who is truth itself, has said, "the soul that sinneth it shall die."

II.—The preparation for, and answer to, this invitation.

1.—*The preparation.* God's mercy

is more plainly shown in giving life, than in any other of His many gracious acts. "Dead in trespasses and sins" we must have remained, "for we had no power of ourselves to help ourselves," had not "Christ, in due time, died for the ungodly," Rom. v. 6; and by His Son's death and resurrection, God commends His love to the world, John iii. 16; Rom. v. 8. Three times did the Saviour raise the dead, each time being an illustration of its threefold stages.

(1.)—Jairus's daughter, Matt. ix. 18—26. Here we see death in its first stage—*coldness;* and lovely as the sleeping damsel may have looked, the touch of Him, who is the Prince of life, was required to raise her up.

(2.)—The widow's son, of Nain, Luke vii. 11—18. Here is death in its second stage—*stiffness.* No doubt of this young man's death can exist, yet, though cold and stiff, all but in the grave, he hears the voice of the Son of Man, and hearing lives.

(3.)—Lazarus, John xi. Death in its last loathsome stage is here vanquished; and even, whilst those loving sisters, who wept and mourned the loss of their only brother, shrink back, with the words, "He stinketh!" the Life-giver cries with a loud voice, "Lazarus come forth," and the grave yields up its prisoner.

2.—*The answer* must ever be a prayer to God for help, Psalm lxxx. 3, 17, 19; lxxxv. 4; Jer. xxxi. 18; Lam. v. 21; for, as St. Paul tells us, by "*grace* we are saved," Eph. ii. 8. Eternal life is God's unspeakable *gift* through Jesus. His pity for all who are beyond man's reach is illustrated in Ezek. xxxvii. Dear children, this invitation runs through God's Word, and we hear it in the still small voice, which says, "This is the way, walk ye in it," Isaiah xxx. 21. If we would enter the strait gate, and walk along the narrow road which our Saviour tells us is the road to everlasting life, and in which He left us an example of walking, we must ask for *grace* to follow in the blessed steps of His most holy life, for the "way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. x. 23.

S. B.

A LESSON ON THE SOWER AND THE SEED.

THE children having read Mark iv. 1—20, the teacher thus begins to question them;—

T. When was this parable delivered?

C. No answer.

T. Do you think that it was long after the commencement of Christ's ministry?

C. No, teacher.

T. Why?

C. Because it is in one of the early chapters of St. Mark. (Another.) Because so few events are mentioned before it.

T. Where did Jesus deliver this parable?

C. In a boat on the sea-shore.

T. What sea?

C. The Sea of Galilee.

T. How do you know this?

C. Because, in Mark v. 1, we read that Jesus passed over to the other side of the sea to the country of the Gadarenes, which is on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

T. Why is this sea so named?

C. Because it is in the province of Galilee.

T. Has it any other name?

C. Yes; the Sea of Tiberias. (Another.) The Lake of Gennesaret. (Another.) The Sea of Chinnereth.

T. Can you tell me of any thing else that happened on or near this sea?

C. Jesus stilled a tempest there. (Another.) He drove the swine into it. (Another.) He walked upon its waters.

T. Yes; I remember a sweet little poem about Galilee, which says, speaking of its waters,—

"They have bathed and kissed His feet,
The feet of Him whom I adore;
Therefore love I Galilee
All other seas before."

T. What cities were on its shores?

C. Capernaum. (Another.) Bethsaida and Chorazin. (Another.) Magdala.

T. In the time of our Lord this Lake was a scene of great bustle and activity, on account of the number of boats that found occupation on its waters. You say that Jesus delivered this parable; who were with Him?

C. His disciples (Matt. xiii. 10) (Another.) His Apostles (Mark iv. 10). (Another.) A mixed multitude out of every city (Luke viii. 4).

T. Do you think they all came to be instructed?

C. No, teacher; some came out of curiosity. (Another.) Some came to find fault.

T. Who were they like?

C. The Pharisees, Matt. xxii. 15.

T. Who wished to see Jesus from curiosity?

C. Herod, Luke xxiii. 8. (Another.) Zaccheus, Luke xix.

T. What is a parable?

C. An instructive story. (Another.) An instructive story with a hidden meaning.

T. We read, in the 2nd verse, that He said unto them—

C. In His doctrine.

T. What does that mean?

C. In His teaching.

T. Read the 3rd verse.

C. "Hearken; behold, there went out a sower to sow."

T. What class of persons does the sower represent?

C. God's ministers. (Another.) Missionaries. (Another.) Teachers.

T. What is the seed?

C. The word of God, Luke viii. 11.

T. On how many different kinds of ground does the seed fall?

C. Four, teacher; that by the wayside. (Another.) The rocky ground. (Another.) The stony ground. (Another.) The good ground.

T. What does our Lord here intend to show?

C. The state of heart in those to whom the Gospel is offered.

T. And what does it teach us?

C. The different manner in which the Gospel is received.

T. Is any other lesson to be learnt from this part of our subject?

No answer.

T. Was there most of the *good* ground, or of the *bad*?

C. Of the bad, teacher.

T. How much more?

C. There were three different kinds of bad ground, and but one good.

T. What, then, does this show us?

C. That, though the Gospel is offered to all, but few accept it.

T. Yes; or, in other words, many are called—

C. But few are chosen.

T. Bring me some more texts to prove that many are called.

C. "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life." (Another.) "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."

T. Now, show me that few are saved.

C. "Strait is the gate, which leadeth to life, and few there be that find it."

T. How is it that so few accept the Gospel?

C. Because Satan comes and takes the seed out of our hearts. (Another.) Because our hearts are very hard. (Another.) Because we love riches

better than God, and sinful pleasures better than holiness.

T. Yes, dear children, man's unwillingness to receive the Gospel is owing to the hardness and corruption of his heart. Can you bring me any texts to prove this?

C. "Men loved darkness rather than light," &c. (Another.) "The carnal mind is enmity against God."

T. Yes; and because our hearts are so evil, they are ready to listen to Satan when he tries to tempt us to sin. What does the Bible tell us about Satan?

C. That "he goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

T. Whom did he tempt to sin?

C. Eve, to eat the fruit. (Another.) Peter, to deny His Master. (Another.) Judas, to betray Christ.

T. Does he ever tempt children?

C. Yes; teacher.

T. When is he most busy?

C. When they are at Church. (Another.) When they are saying their prayers. (Another.) When they are reading the Bible.

T. And when they leave God's house what does Satan do?

C. He tries to make them trifle and talk foolishly, and so to take away the good seed from them.

T. Yes, dear children; Satan is ever on the watch to lead us to sin. Can God tempt men to sin?

C. No, teacher; for the Bible says, "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempeth He any man."

T. Does God allow men to be tempted and persecuted?

C. Yes, teacher.

T. Why?

C. To separate His faithful people from mere professors. (Another.) To show His power, in enabling them to resist temptation.

T. Who stood firm in the midst of persecution and temptation?

C. Job, Jesus. (Another.) Daniel and the three youths. (Another.) Joseph.

T. Are children ever persecuted?

C. Yes; by wicked people when they try to do what is right.

T. Yes; I once read of a dear little praying child, who had a wicked ungodly brother. This brother persecuted him because he was good and loved God. One morning, as the dear little boy was on his knees praying to God, his brother, with unprovoked malice, gave him a violent blow on his head. The gentle child reproved not, but meekly looking up to his God, said aloud, "Let brotherly love continue." What did this little boy do when he was tempted and persecuted?

C. He prayed to God.

T. What else must we do?

C. We must resist temptation, "Resist the devil," &c. (Another.) We must watch as well as pray.

T. Yes; we must practice watchfulness. Yes, dear children, if Peter, and the other disciples had been watchful and prayerful at Gethsemane, the former would not have—

C. Denied his Master.

T. The latter would not have—

C. Forsaken him.

T. You see, then, how many directions are given in God's word about—

C. Resisting temptation.

T. What, then, is our duty with respect to God's word?

C. To study it. (Another.) To listen.

T. How?

C. To be taught. (Another.) Humbly. (Another.) With reverence.

T. What does David say about God's word?

C. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Another) "I have esteemed the words of thy mouth more than my necessary food."

T. Yes, in order to learn the means by which we may resist temptation, we must—

C. Study God's Word with devout attention, in a teachable, child-like spirit.

T. Can you tell me of any who did so?

C. The Bereans.

T. Yes, dear children, you must not only study God's Word in order to teach you how to resist temptation, but, at all times, in all seasons, in every difficulty, make it your guide. Why should we love the Bible?

C. Because God wrote it. (Another) Because it shows us the way to heaven. (Another) Because it teaches us how to be good.

T. And when applied to the heart and conscience by the Holy Spirit, what does it do?

C. It turns us from sin to holiness.

T. Yes, dear children, it is God's appointed means for the conversion of the sinner.

T. Can you tell me any texts to show the power of God's Word?

C. "For the Word of God is quick and powerful," &c. Heb. iv. 12. (Another) "Is not my Word like a fire?" Jer. xxiii. 29.

T. Can you tell me of any who were converted by hearing God's Word?

C. Five thousand men, Acts iv. 4. (Another) The Ethiopian eunuch.

T. I have heard of a man who was converted by reading that oft-repeated passage, in the 5th of Genesis, "So he died." He was led to reflect that death was the lot of all, therefore death would overtake him, and then where should he go?

Did the Apostles understand this parable of the sower?

C. No, teacher.

T. What, then, did they do?

C. They asked Jesus to explain it to them.

T. Was that right?

C. Yes, teacher.

T. What must you do when you find any difficulty in the Bible?

C. Ask God to help me to understand it.

T. Will He hear you?

C. Yes, for He says, "Then shall ye know, if ye follow on to know the Lord." (Another) "Ask, and it shall be given you."

T. Who sought instruction, and found it?

C. The Ethiopian eunuch. (Another) Cornelius. (Another) David, when he said, "Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes," &c.

T. Then, when we do not understand God's Word, we must—

C. Ask, as the Apostles did, and like them, we shall be taught.

T. Your teachers, depending on God's guidance, help you to understand Scripture; and the more pains they take with you, the greater is your responsibility. You must not be satisfied with *listening* only; what must you do besides?

C. Practice what the Bible teaches.

T. Why?

C. To show our love to God. (Another) Because God tells us to do so.

T. Where?

C. "Be ye doers of the Word." (Another) "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven," &c. (Another) "If ye love Me, keep My commandments."

T. Yes, if we are contented with listening to God's Word, and reading and learning it, while we follow our sinful pleasures, God will be—

C. Very angry; for He says, "Love not the world," &c. (Another) "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

T. Read the 20th verse.

C. "And these are they which are sown on good ground, such as hear the Word and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty," &c.

T. What does this mean?

C. That some people are better than others. (Another) That some do not make so good a use of God's grace as others.

T. Will God accept such?

C. Yes, teacher, if they are sincere. (Another) If they try to improve the

talent they have. (Another) If they aim to bring forth fruit.

T. Yes; true Christians make a different use of their privileges, but we must all aim to bring forth fruit. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

T. What is the fruit that we must aim to bring forth?

C. The fruits of righteousness. (Another) The fruits of the Spirit.

T. What are they?

C. The fruit of the Spirit is, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, &c.

T. Can a child bring forth these fruits?

C. Yes, teacher.

T. How?

C. By being humble. (Another) By obeying our parents and teachers. (Another) By loving God. (Another) By being kind to our companions. (Another) By not being angry when provoked.

T. Yes; I will tell you a little story of a missionary who exhibited the fruits of the Spirit in his intercourse with the heathen. One day, while preaching, he was much annoyed by a man who constantly called on him to perform a miracle. "Show us a miracle," he cried; and on the missionary remaining silent, he used the worst possible language towards him, seized his back, pulled his coat, &c. At last the missionary called out, "I have just performed a prodigious miracle; I have listened to your reviling and borne your shameful conduct without becoming angry."

T. Can you mention any one in Scripture who brought forth these fruits?

C. Stephen, when he prayed for his persecutors.

T. How must we bring forth this fruit?

C. With patience.

T. Where are we exhorted to be patient?

C. "In your patience possess ye your souls," Luke xxi. 19. (Another) "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us," Heb. xii. 1.

T. Why is patience necessary?

C. Because it is difficult to bring forth fruit.

T. Why?

C. Because of the wickedness of our hearts. (Another) Because the work of grace in the heart is gradual.

T. Prove this.

C. First the blade, then the ear, &c. (Another) "The path of the just is as a shining light, which shineth more and more," &c.

T. Yes, we must bring forth fruit with patience, cheerfully serving God in the midst of difficulties and discouragements.

T. If you sow seed in your garden, are you sure it will come up?

C. No, teacher.

T. Why not?

C. Because the ground may not be good. (Another) Because the seed may not be good.

T. But if the ground and the seed are good, do you feel sure that it will produce fruit?

C. Yes, teacher.

T. Why?

C. Because God says, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." (Another) Because God blesses the use of means.

T. How do you know that the good seed will bear fruit in the heart?

C. Because God says so.

T. Where?

C. Isaiah lv., 11. It shall not return unto me void, &c. (Another) "They that sow in tears *shall* reap in joy."

T. Yes, dear children; though the seed may be hid and seem lost and buried, it is not. When God sees fit, He will bring it to light, and what has been sown in faith and prayer, will be reaped in joy. The Word when received will bring forth fruit.

APPLICATION.

T. When is the good seed sown in your hearts?

C. At Church. (Another) By your teachers. (Another) When we learn the Bible.

T. Yes, dear children; you are all hearers of the word,—you all have the good seed sown in your hearts; but does it sink into them, take root and bear fruit? Are your hearts tender? prepared by God's Holy Spirit to receive the precious seed? If not—if you are still in your sins, careless and unconcerned about your souls—beware lest you lose your privileges. God may say of you,—Let him alone. *Now, this day* fall down on your knees before Him confessing your sins, ask Him to forgive you for the sake of His dear Son, to take away your stony heart and give you a heart of flesh.

Behold *now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation!

Plans and Intelligence.

LITANY FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

[In many Sunday schools it is the practise of the teachers to assemble together for a few minutes before the opening, for the purpose of seeking God's blessing upon the work in which they are about to engage. The following brief Litany, which has been forwarded to us by a clergyman, may serve to direct the devotions of our fellow-labourers at such seasons, and may also be usefully employed at meetings of teachers for mutual improvement, or for discussing plans for the benefit of their scholars.]

ALMIGHTY GOD, unto whom all hearts be opened, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy Holy name; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

With pureness, with knowledge, with wisdom and patience, with long-suffering, with love unfeigned, with compassion for the ignorant, and with the meekness and gentleness of Christ,

Bless us, good Lord.

With the Word of Truth; with the Power of God; with the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left; with child-like obedience to Thy will; with stedfast consistency of walk, and with the mind that was in Christ Jesus,

Arm us, good Lord.

We sinners do beseech Thee to hear us, O Lord God: and to give us each grace to perceive and know what things we ought to do, and also to vouchsafe unto us strength and power faithfully to fulfil the same, to the honour and glory of Thy Holy name;

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please Thee abundantly to bless these schools; to forgive us all our sins, negligences and ignorances in the teaching of these children; to water

with Thy heavenly dew the seed sown here this day; to impart to each child the gift of Thy Holy Spirit, that they may be all taught of God, and serve before Thee in holiness and righteousness all their days;

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please Thee to open their eyes, to unstop their ears, to seal the instruction of Life upon their young hearts; to impress and arrest their thoughtless minds; to order their steps according to Thy Word; to reveal to them the fulness and tenderness of their Redeemer, and to make them all followers of God as dear children;

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

O Almighty God, of whose only gift it cometh that Thy faithful people do unto Thee true and laudable service, leave us not, neither forsake us, we beseech Thee; let none of us grow weary in well-doing. Let none of us faint in our minds; stir up, we pray Thee, Thy strength, and come and help us; stir up we beseech Thee, Thy gift within us; may a Saviour's love constrain us more than ever, may the words of Thy promise cheer and strengthen us, and do Thou prosper the work of our hands upon us. O prosper Thou our handywork, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Hear us, O Lord.

Most gracious God, the Giver of all good and perfect gifts, give Thy grace, we beseech Thee, to Thy servants to whom the charge of this parish is committed; and so replenish them with the truth of thy doctrine, and endue them with innocency of life, that both by word and good example, they may faithfully serve before Thee, to the glory of Thy great name, and the benefit of Thy Holy church, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, one only Saviour, the Prince of peace, take away all prejudice and ill-will, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord, that as there is but one body, and one spirit, one Hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may henceforth be all of one heart, and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Most merciful Father, we commend to Thy loving care all who are engaged, as we are, in this blessed work. Look down from Heaven graciously upon every teacher in every christian school; purify and elevate all our motives; keep us by Thy mighty grace unspotted from the world; may we all run our appointed race looking unto Jesus. Make us all wise to win souls; may we pursue our work with constant, earnest prayer; may we ever teach with eternity in view, and work diligently whilst our short day of opportunity lasts. Dismiss us with Thy heavenly blessing, and guard us with Thy heavenly care, till we once more gather before Thee; and this we beg, for Jesus Christ, His sake. Amen.

Our Father, &c., The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

TEXTS FOR TEACHERS.

Joshua i. 1—10.
Ecclesiastes xi. 1—6.
Isaiah lv. 6—11.
Daniel xii. 2, 3.
St. Matthew xiii. 24—30.
St. Matthew xiii. 18—23.
St. Luke v. 1—11.
St. John xxi. 15—18.
Galatians vi. 1—10.

TEACHERS' PRAYER UNION.

REMEMBERING the injunction of St. James, "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally," we again invite our fellow-labourers to continue their supplications for God's special help and blessing on the work in which they are engaged; and to unite, week by week, "with a true heart, and full assurance of faith," in asking guidance and strength for those who are seeking to advance the Saviour's kingdom, as well as upon the objects of their care.

The following special topics are suggested for Tuesday morning in each week of the ensuing quarter:—

July 7th.—*For the continual assistance of the Holy Spirit*, to lead and keep both teachers and scholars in the way of truth.

July 14th.—*For the Church of England*, and especially that it may be a faithful witness for Christ, and be preserved from false teachers.

July 21st.—*For the Ministers of the Gospel*, and especially that they may have understanding of the word of God, and both by their preaching and living, set it forth to all men.

July 28th.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, and especially that the Divine blessing may rest upon its Officers and Committee, that they may conduct its operations to the promotion of God's glory.

August 4th.—*For all Superintendents*, that they may rule with meekness and discretion, and so promote brotherly love among teachers, and obedience in the scholars.

August 11th.—*For all Sunday School Teachers*, that they may personally realise the power of the Gospel, and from their own experience make it known to their scholars.

August 18th.—*For all Sunday Scholars*, that they may receive with meekness the engrafted word, and daily grow in grace.

August 25th.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, that its labours may tend to promote the efficiency of teachers, and be of help and comfort to them.

September 1st.—*For Scholars who have passed into the world*, that they may continue steadfastly in those things which they have learned in the word of God.

September 8th.—*For the due observance of the Lord's Day*, that it may not be profaned by worldly amusements, but be kept holy unto the Lord.

September 15th.—*For the Parents and Relations of Sunday Scholars*, that they all may be members of the family of God in Christ Jesus.

September 22nd.—*For the Queen and the Royal Family*, that they may, above all things, seek the honour of God, and enjoy His grace and blessing.

September 29th.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, and especially that its Publications may be kept free from error, and may render assistance to teachers in their work.

*** Copies of this Paper may be obtained free, on application at the Offices of the Institute.

Sunday School Institute.

PROCEEDINGS AT THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

THE Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the Institute, was held on Tuesday evening, May 12th, at St. James's Hall; and notwithstanding very unfavourable weather there was a fair attendance. The chair was taken by the RIGHT HON. LORD CALTHORPE, and among those present were the Ven. Archdeacon Utterton, Rev. W. Cadman, Rev. W. Sparrow Simpson, Rev. C. Marshall, Rev. J. H. Titcomb, Rev. R. M. Martin, Rev. E. T. Hudson, Rev. H. Brooke, Rev. E. Auriol, Rev. J. M'Connell Hussey, Rev. J. Kempthorne, Rev. L. B. White, etc.

A hymn having been sung, the Rev. W. Sparrow Simpson offered prayer.

THE CHAIRMAN said—I learn from the programme which I hold in my hand, that the Chairman is expected to offer a few remarks. Let me say, then, that the more I know about this Institute the more valuable it appears to my mind, and I hope the attendance this evening, though by no means inconsiderable (notwithstanding the state of the weather) is no criterion of the interest which is felt by the Christian public, or rather the members of our own Church in its operations. One object of the Institute is to improve the education of the children of this metropolis, and of this country. It is most desirable to raise the standard of teachers in Sunday schools. We are all much indebted to those who give up their time for teaching on the day of rest. At the same time it is of the utmost importance that the instruction which is afforded to the children in our Sunday schools should be of a sound kind, such as becomes the Church of England, and I have no doubt, that in this respect, the value of the Institute is very great. We cannot expect the children who attend Sunday schools to make satisfactory progress unless they are taught on sound principles, and the fact that so many children leave the day schools at a very early period, renders it the more important that they should be instructed at Sunday schools in the best possible manner.

F. NORTON, ESQ., Financial Secretary, read the Report, which commenced by saying, that it was to be feared that the Institute did not meet with the amount of encouragement and support to which it was entitled, mainly because the need and value of such an instrumentality was not sufficiently known and appreciated. The great object, it went on to say, of the Institute was to promote the efficiency of the Sunday school system in connection with the Church of England, and, as the chief means to this end, to raise the standard, both intellectually and spiritually, of the great body of Sunday school teachers. None who had any knowledge of the practical working of Sunday schools, who had compared the paucity of the results obtained with the extent of the means employed, and who had mourned the many defects which were to be found even in the most efficient schools, could for a moment doubt the great need that existed for an Institution which should, by God's blessing, be the means both of stimulating the managers and teachers of our schools to greater efforts towards making them the true nurseries for our spiritual

Church, and of supplying them with such information and assistance as might the better enable them to accomplish their object. Whilst estimating the value of the Sunday school system, as regarded the children, we should not overlook its importance as a means of promoting the spiritual well-being of the 300,000 teachers voluntarily labouring for their improvement, and, who thus established a bond of Christian sympathy between all classes of the community, who, either as teachers, parents, or scholars, became associated together by the interest engendered by the Sunday school. In speaking of the nature of the assistance afforded, the Report said that in order to secure, as far as possible, uniformity in the teaching, and to supply the lack of the weekly study class for the teachers, where the clergyman found himself unable to conduct it, series of lessons were issued by the Society, accompanied by notes and outlines of the instruction to be given, with copious Scripture references. The advantage of such systematic course of instruction over the plan, unhappily permitted in some schools, of each teacher selecting his own lessons, could not be over-estimated; it secured connected, progressive teaching, adapted to the capacities of each class; it led the children on from the elements of Christian truth to a general knowledge of the Bible, and the chief doctrines and articles of the Christian faith as taught in the Scriptural formularies of our Church; it necessitated the due preparation of the subject on the part of the teacher, and it encouraged the scholars (and sometimes their parents also) to the study of the lessons at home during the week. Free grants of the various publications were made to schools in poor districts, and the Committee regretted that the very limited funds placed at their disposal prevented them from responding much more liberally to the many pressing appeals which they received, especially as the whole cost of the school was often borne exclusively by a clergyman whose income from his living was often extremely narrow. To superintendents the Institute offered many special advantages, which could be obtained by no other kind of agency. By means of its Magazines it showed a superintendent the standard to which other schools, in like circumstances to his own, had attained by judicious management, and gave accounts of the various plans, rules, and regulations which had been tried and adopted; and the success or failure which had attended them. The periodicals also contained papers by writers of experience, on all matters of school management and discipline, and supplied a medium of communication for the interchange of ideas, and for inquiries on any points of doubt or difficulty. The Institute was also a centre of union for Metropolitan superintendents, periodical meetings being held for the discussion of subjects relating to the management of the Sunday school; and it furnished Roll Books, Registers, Class Books, etc., on the most approved plan for maintaining the school in a state of discipline and good order, so arranged as to show at a glance the present state and progress of the school. During the past year lectures, conversational meetings, and training classes had been held at the rooms of the Institute as heretofore; but the Committee, finding that the attendance at these meetings was gradually diminishing, owing to the difficulty of inducing teachers, especially ladies, to come any great distance from home in the evening, have held several series of training classes in the outlying districts of the metropolis,—at Holloway, Kilburn, Hoxton, Bermondsey, Paddington, Bloomsbury, Kennington, Islington, Fulham, Shoreditch, Hampstead, etc., and they were glad to say that the attendance of teachers, and the interest evinced in such meetings, had generally been very gratifying. Man-

chester, Clifton, the Isle of Wight, Boston, Guildford, Ewell, Rochester, and other places, had been visited by deputations during the year. As regarded the Magazines, the Committee said that, without wishing to decry the merits of other kindred periodicals, they would urge upon all Sunday school teachers and others connected with the Church of England, the duty of giving their heartiest support to those Magazines which strive to uphold and maintain the doctrines and formularies of our beloved Church, as an important part of the instruction to be given to her youthful members; more especially in times like the present, when foes without and foes within are seeking to draw away the unlearned from their due allegiance by false yet specious arguments. The financial position of the Institute still continued, it was observed, to be a source of great anxiety to the Committee. In the year 1861, they made a great effort to raise a sufficient fund to pay off the heavy liabilities incurred for the great stock in trade of their several publications which it was found absolutely necessary to keep on hand, but which (never having had any capital with which to commence their publishing operations) they were compelled to obtain on credit, paying off the liabilities incurred in each year with the monies received in the year following. This was the utmost that they were ever enabled to accomplish, the very low price at which they were compelled to issue their various publications, to meet the capabilities of Sunday schools, which were proverbially ill supplied with funds, yielding little or no profit. At the time mentioned £1000 was raised for this purpose, the Committee contributing themselves £200, yet the failure of the usual income, from donations and collections during the past two years, owing, in a great measure, to the distress in the Cotton manufacturing Districts had deprived the Society of more than half the benefit. In subscriptions from schools and individuals, the decline had not been very considerable. The Committee earnestly appealed to all the friends of Sunday schools, both among the clergy and the laity, to come forward liberally to their assistance in their present necessity, being well assured that, were the Society once placed out of debt, and with an available working capital at its disposal, it would be well able to continue its course with vigour and success. The sum of one thousand pounds, in addition to their usual annual income, would suffice for that purpose, and the Committee could not but feel that they had a good plea to ask it of the Christian public.

The cash accounts showed that the receipts of the year from all sources amounted to £3,562 8s. 2d., and that after the disbursements £188 was overdrawn.

The VEN. ARCHDEACON UTTERTON, on rising to move the adoption of the Report said,—My Lord and Christian friends, I feel it a great privilege to add my humble testimony to the great importance of the Sunday school work, and of the labours of this Institute which endeavours to give the greatest efficiency to Sunday school work. Every year I feel that our Sunday schools are becoming more instead of less important. The greater the height to which secular education is carried, the more important is it that we should carry on alongside with it the spiritual work of a religious and Christian education. So strongly have I felt this that, during the last year, I organised in my archdeaconary, a series of meetings which have all without exception, been of a most gratifying and encouraging character. I have invited the clergy and all who felt interested in the Sunday school work to meet on a given evening, and we have had most delightful and refreshing evenings together. After two or three well-prepared addresses, we had colloquial

intercourse, and, in some instances, we prevailed on members of the female sex so far to overcome their natural diffidence as to give us the benefit of their experience, and to propose questions which they wished to be answered. So gratifying and acceptable were those meetings, that I have received from almost every part of the county requests that I would organise a series of similar meetings, to be held during the present year. I feel that never was the Sunday school work so important as it is at the present era. It is deeply painful to my mind, that one who wears the same cloth that I wear, and who occupies one of the highest positions in the Church, should have brought such scandal on the Church of Christ. It is my conviction—I know nothing of his private history—that he to whom I now allude never was a Sunday school teacher, and never taught in a Sunday school class. He has written in utter ignorance of the Bible; and if he had learned not only what the scholar learns in a Sunday school, but what the teacher learns, (for nowhere does the teacher learn the lessons of the Bible so well as in the Sunday school), he would, I feel perfectly satisfied, never have put forth such a work as he has done. I am quite aware that children receive a religious education in day schools, and that every school master, and every school mistress, in a day school, ought to be a religious teacher. But the Sunday school has a totally different sphere from that of the day school; the atmosphere is altogether one of love. Besides, you get children in the Sunday school whom you cannot secure in the day school. Alas! children are taken from us in our day schools generally, as soon as they reach the age of twelve or thirteen, and are entering on the most perilous period of life. The minister feels the greatest burden on his soul when they have just been let loose from the restraints of school, and begin to think that it is time for them to assert their independence. The lads who used to greet him with a smile, when they met him now, look like the sinners spoken of in the Book of Proverbs, standing at the corners of the streets. How important is it that we should, if possible, get such lads as these under Sunday school instruction, and exercise that beneficent influence over them which may, with God's grace, protect them from the snares and dangers to which they are so peculiarly exposed. Again, I think that, whereas day schools are generally limited to the children of the poor, we ought in our Sunday schools to embrace (if possible) children of every class. I think that with a little careful management this might easily be effected. It is effected in my own parish. We have young ladies in the Sunday school who are most punctual in their attendance. We have also a very large class of youths and young men of from 16 to 25 years of age. I organised that class myself, four or five years ago; and as I found that my strength was not sufficient for conducting it in addition to my pulpit work, it has long been conducted by a medical man, a man, I may observe, who has an overwhelming practice, but who yet finds time for the teaching of this class of young people. A gentleman on the platform, for whom I preached last Sunday morning, afterwards invited me to visit his Sunday school. I went, and there I saw a most intelligent and pious female—a lady of his parish—teaching some thirty or five-and-thirty maid servants. Who can ever estimate the benefits of such instruction? Among the scholars, I saw a blind girl, twenty years of age, whose face was beaming with intelligence and delight as she received instruction from that excellent teacher. It is remarked in the Report which has been read to the meeting that the Sunday school work is of no less importance, as regards the teachers, than as regards the children taught. It is my firm conviction that God intends that every devout member of His Church, every soul that has been con-

verted and won to Christ, should take part in spiritual work. Spiritual work is by no means to be confined to the ministers of the Gospel. Certainly in these days it would be utterly impossible for us to compass the work which lies before us if we were not surrounded by pious and devout laymen, ready to assist in carrying on that work. Our arms would sink down if we were left to our own unassisted efforts. It has been stated that, whereas there ought to be one clergyman to every thousand of the population, there is in fact not more than one to every seven thousand of the population, while there is a policeman to every seven hundred and fifty. If this be the case, we surely require to be greatly assisted by the laity. Now, no sooner are young persons impressed with religion than it becomes of the utmost importance that we should find them something to do in spreading the kingdom of their Redeemer. We find this especially at the time of confirmation. Whatever others may think of confirmation, my own experience is that it is a season, when preparation is properly conducted, of religious revival in every parish where God has placed a godly, faithful minister. A short time ago, I gathered together in my parish 102 females, whom I undertook to prepare for confirmation. Many of them appeared thoughtless at first, but every time we met there was greater seriousness. I distributed them into four classes, and dealt with them individually, trying to bring my soul to bear on their souls, and I then saw what a blessed instrument we had in our Church in confirmation, and how honoured and owned it was of God in winning the hearts of young people. Seeing how God had moved many of them to give themselves up to Christ, I felt it to be of the utmost importance that I should give them something to do for Christ. And where did I look? I naturally looked to the Sunday school; I placed them there, and it was most cheering and delightful to see these young people employed in giving out with much interest and intelligence, those blessed truths which they had received in all their vitality and power. Until very lately, my boys' school was conducted entirely by an officer belonging to Aldershot camp. I have also had a large Sunday evening school, which was got up and conducted entirely by young officers, and I can never tell what a loss I experienced when those officers left the neighbourhood. Often did I mark their devotion in prayer, and their wrapt attention when I expounded to them the Word of God. They were indeed soldiers of the Cross as well as of their Queen, and I was delighted to see them taking part in the Sunday school work of my parish. During the last year it has been my most solemn and responsible duty to examine young men who were about to offer themselves for holy orders. In such cases I have to conduct two examinations,—the first being preliminary and occurring some months before the ordination, and the second immediately preceding the ordination. I make it a practice to enquire of the young men whether they can conscientiously give an affirmative reply to the question which will be put to them on the day of their ordination, namely, whether they believe themselves to be inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take the office of the ministry upon them. I try to bring them to see what constitutes a call; that it consists in having for the ruling principle a desire to win souls for Christ, and a willingness to give up everything for this one object. If this question is answered satisfactorily, I proceed to ask them what they have done already to win souls for Christ. Have you, I say, ever taught in a Sunday school? Have you ever visited a sick man's bedside? Have you ever spoken to a friend or acquaintance about his soul? And I can declare that, without exception, those who have passed through the

examination most satisfactorily, so far as I could guage their spirits and feelings, and those whose conduct had been most satisfactory afterwards, so far as I was acquainted with their career, were persons who had been engaged in Sunday school teaching. Never do we learn more ourselves than when we are trying to bring young children to understand the deep truths of God's blessed Word.

Having said this much about Sunday school teachers, perhaps I may, before sitting down, be allowed to make a few observations with regard to the teaching itself in a Sunday school. Now that teaching should always be prepared with great pains. We should never come lightly to a Sunday class. We should always know in what passage of Scripture we are going to instruct the children, and, using all the helps we can, endeavour to get a thorough knowledge of what we are going to teach them. I feel it to be of vast importance, especially in the present day, that we should have a systematic course of teaching for children as regards doctrine; that we should instil into their minds clear views of the great doctrines of the Gospel. There is at present a great want of dogmatic teaching of our children, there is a great want of clear views of our religion, in our Church and in this country. Some years ago, when I was travelling up the Caledonian Canal, in Scotland, on board a steamer which was not much larger than the small steamers on the Thames, I got into conversation with the captain on the subject of religion; and, although he was not a man of the first class in his profession, and perhaps not even of the second, or the third, I found myself scarcely able to keep pace with him when he discussed some of the deepest subjects of our holy religion; and I could not help thinking how rarely you would find a man occupying a similar position in this country, possessing such clear views of the great doctrines of the Gospel as my friend had. It is most important that the children in our Sunday schools should have a clear knowledge of these great doctrines. But, at the same time, we must remember that while we endeavour to give them clear views of the Gospel, it should not be merely as a system or form, but in combination with affection and love. The doctrines should be instilled into the heart, and taught as realities. In fact, we are not to teach the children who come before us *Christianity*, but we are to teach them *Christ*. Whatever we bring to bear upon the children should be presented to them in Christ. The great difference between our religion and all other religions is this, that all our doctrines and all our morality are embodied in the person of Christ, the living Son of God in human flesh. Do I want to show a child what sin is? I take him to Calvary, and show him what Christ suffered there because of sin. Do I wish to show a child that he may have forgiveness? Again I take him to Calvary. Do I wish to recommend to a child any duty, any virtue, any grace? I bring him to the living Saviour. Would I fortify a child against the fear of death? I take him to the place where Jesus lay. Would I tell a child of the resurrection? I point him to the Saviour; I show him how He rose in the same body, though glorified bearing the very marks of the cross; and I show him that not only shall we in like manner rise up in the flesh from the dead, but we shall also recognise those whom we knew in the flesh. It is thus that, without bringing anything before the minds of children that it is undesirable to bring before them, we may fortify them against objections urged against our religion. I believe there is no effectual argument against error but Christ himself. The character of Christ is a perfectly sufficient argument in favour of the New Testament, showing that it is not "of the earth earthy," but is of God. While

you endeavour to bring Christ home to the children you will, I am sure, offer up prayer to God on their behalf. They have each their peculiar infirmities, they have each their peculiar trials and difficulties at home tending to thwart your efforts, and you will take much greater interest in teaching your class if, before leaving home, you have presented each of the children with their peculiar circumstances, character and temper, before God, and asked Him to enable you to speak a word in season to them. I would ask you, in the next place, to go to your work with full assurance that God will bless you in it, and that—although you may not see any good results now—the results which you do see being often such as tend to dishearten you, yet you will see them hereafter. The seed which has been sown, though it may have lain dormant for many a year, will one day take root and strike upwards, to God's glory and to your everlasting joy; for it is God's invariable rule always to bless the faithful and prayerful efforts of His people, and yet to do it in such a way as to shew how jealous He is for His own glory, and so that it may be seen that, after all, it is not to him that willeth or to him that runneth, but to God that sheweth mercy.

The Rev. W. CADMAN:—I have very great pleasure in seconding the resolution. It is an old saying that if anything be worth doing at all it is worth doing well, and that old saying is applicable to the work of the Sunday school Institute, which we are met to support. The Institute is engaged in doing a work that is worth doing. We cannot have our attention fixed upon one fact which the Report mentions—namely, that 500,000 children would be destitute of religious instruction if it were not for Sunday schools—without seeing that the work which God has placed before Sunday school teachers is a work of the very greatest importance. Now, that Sunday school teaching is a very great good is a position which I need not employ many words to establish. I might appeal to the experience of many persons present who are Sunday school teachers, and I have no doubt that they would, one after another, declare that, although they have had many discouragements, yet on the other hand, they have not been left without encouragements, showing that God will not allow His work to be carried on without giving it success. We must expect success in our work. Of course our duty is the same whether we meet with success or not; but if we really believe that God's Word testifying to the Lord Jesus Christ is the great means of conversion, and the great means of sanctification, then we see that the teaching of God's Word is necessary for the carrying out of God's purposes, and therefore that when we are teaching His Word, we may confidently reckon upon that blessing which He has promised to give, in order that the gracious purposes of His own will may be effected. Great good may therefore be expected as the result of Sunday school work. At the same time, one cannot but acknowledge that there are many deficiencies connected with that work. There are very few Sunday schools which we can visit without observing deficiencies, and the best Sunday school teachers are those who are most aware of imperfections and deficiencies connected with their work. Hence, just in proportion as we feel that our work is a good work, and is worth doing, we are led to this further conclusion, that it is worth doing well, that we ought to seek to do it well, and that if there be any means by which efficiency in Sunday school teaching can possibly be promoted, it is as much our duty to seek after efficiency in the use of such means as it is our duty to use means at all. When we bring our sacrifice to God we must not be satisfied with offering that which costs us nothing; we must not be satisfied with offering the blind, and

the lame, and the sick, and the torn. A Sunday school teacher may have good intentions, but if there be not also something like proper training for his work, the very effort to perform that work may be connected with a manifestation of that want of knowledge, want of tact, want of spiritual wisdom which, to a very great extent, may account for the want of success, and for those imperfections which every superintendent must deplore. And here we see the importance of this Sunday School Institute. It meets a great need; and when we think of the 300,000 teachers, and bear in mind that it does not follow because a teacher has a warm heart that he has a wise judgment, we must all feel that an Institute which undertakes to put before these 300,000 teachers the best modes of conveying instruction, the best and most approved means of gaining the children's attention, and communicating, in a simple yet impressive manner, the truths of the Gospel, is an organisation which commends itself at once to our affection and support. Now that is what this Institute is doing. It is labouring not only that Sunday school instruction may be carried on, but that it may be carried on as efficiently as possible; that what we offer may be the very best we have; and that such pains may be taken by superintendents, by teachers, and by clergymen, all of them uniting and combining together, that when they meet together for prayer they may be able to ask God not to bless their rude, careless, slothful, sleepy efforts, but to bless the desire which He has put into their minds, to consecrate all that He has given them to His service in this work. But now, this Sunday School Institute, which thus aims at doing well a work which is worth doing, and which God has wonderfully commended by blessing, is, it appears, in great need. We are told of its difficulties. It ought to have more support; it ought to have warm-hearted supporters. There are some I fear who do not sufficiently value the three first words of its title. It is the "Church of England" Sunday School Institute. I would not say one word which might seem to depreciate another Institution, formed under a different name, for the purpose of carrying on a similar work; but I do maintain that, by Sunday school teachers, who are members of the Church of England, and clergymen, the fact of our having an Institute of our own—a Church of England Sunday School Institute—is one which ought especially to be noticed, and noticed in order that they may do more towards securing for the Institute adequate support. To refer to one circumstance which is by no means of slight importance, who can look at the lesson books which have been published by the Institute, without perceiving that they breathe that devout, that reverential, and yet that child-like spirit, which is so eminently characteristic of the Liturgy of our own Church? Who can read those lesson-books without seeing that the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in its simplicity and in its truthfulness is presented to the children who are taught out of those books, and to the teachers who are encouraged to use them? When we find the children in a Sunday school asking their teachers questions, which could only have been suggested by a book of such unenviable notoriety as that which a bishop of our own Church has put forth, it is of the greatest consequence that the clergyman should feel that his teachers will be able to meet those children's enquiries by directing them to simple texts of the Bible which point to Christ as the Saviour, and to the Holy Spirit as the great source of regeneration and comfort. I, for one, am not afraid of infidelity, if the naked sword of the Spirit be but faithfully and prayerfully used. I believe that the sword of the Spirit—God's Word—is God's appointed instrumentality; and if we can but get that Word into the minds of

the children in our schools,—get it into their minds in such a way that they will be able to give to every one that asketh them a reason for the hope that is in them,—we shall not only be doing our part, but we shall, in the most practical way, be meeting the infidel objections of the present day. The knowledge of God's truth is the great preservative against infidel error. Let me just sum up by saying, that the Church of England Sunday School Institute is supplying a great need; that it is, through God's blessing, affecting a great good; that it is engaged in a great work; and that it wants great help. As far as you can, give it help, and then the Lord will graciously accept your offering, and enable you to do, in every thing else, what we try to do in reference to this Institute, namely, while we serve the Lord, to serve Him with the very best that we have.

Lord CALTHORPE being obliged to leave the Meeting, his Lordship was here succeeded in the chair by the venerable ARCHDEACON UTTERTON.

J. G. FLEET, ESQ., said:—Mr. Chairman and Christian friends, in rising to say a few words in support of the Resolution before the Meeting, I feel that I have first to discharge a duty, and then to enjoy a pleasure. My duty is to say a few words on behalf of the Sunday School Institute, and my pleasure will be to say a few words on the Sunday school system in general. With regard to the Sunday School Institute, I almost feel as if I were talking on behalf of my own child. You know how fond mothers are of talking about their children; but I will endeavour to exercise a father's judgment by curtailing what I have to say. This, at least, I will say, that all I have to advance on behalf of the Institute will come from the very bottom of my heart, and from a thorough conviction that it well deserves all I can say in favour of it. It was my privilege to be present at its first formation, and on its Nineteenth Anniversary I count it a privilege to stand on its platform. I have never seen anything, either in its principles or in its management, that ought, for one instant, to make any one sorry for having given it his adhesion. It is a Church of England Society; and, however highly we may value the labours of others who have worked the Sunday school system well and successfully, yet I must say that, if there be such a thing as Christian jealousy, we have it. There may, I think, be Christian emulation, and that is the only kind of rivalry that has ever existed between the two societies. Again, the Institute is a Sunday School Society; its efforts are turned in that particular direction. It is also a Society formed among superintendents and teachers of various schools and voluntary associations, and others who are strongly impressed with the benefits of the Sunday school system, and who feel that, if the work is to be done properly, it must be done systematically. Now, the matter to which I wish to direct your attention is this. The question has often been asked, "Why may not a Sunday school be worked as successfully and energetically without this Society as with it?" It is perfectly true that one may find, in this favoured metropolis, many a school which seems to be going on quite successfully without any external assistance at all; and, in the visits which it has been my duty to make on behalf of this Society, I have often had the gratification of entering a school like that. But if from that it is argued that no external influence is needed, there we come at once to an issue. I maintain, after many years' experience, that if a Sunday school is to be maintained in vigour, there must be a mingling of external influence with the spirit within. Many a clergyman may do almost what he likes with his own school; and, if he happen to be fortunately one who has himself participated in the work of teaching when young, and before he be-

came a minister, the probability is that his Sunday school will be worked thoroughly and successfully. But in conceding that, I have, in fact, only conceded the very point for which I contend. In that case the clergyman brings with him the experience which I maintain is needed; and if we come across a parish, where we see the advantage which a school has derived from the experience gained by a clergyman in early life, with what force may it be argued that the managers and teachers of Sunday schools, who have not had similiar advantages, must greatly benefit by such assistance as is offered to them by this Institute? We are, perhaps, all too apt to shut ourselves up within ourselves, and to think that we can, with our own ample stores of experience and knowledge, accomplish all that we have in hand. It is true that there is a danger of our going about too much to seek influence from without, and neglecting to seek that inward influence which must grace and develop all our capacities; but on the other hand, there is the opposite danger of our being so wrapped up in our own feelings and experience as to rob ourselves of much good that we might gain by Christian communion. There is such a thing undoubtedly,—and it is of the highest value—as a Christian's solitary communion with our Creator; but the word of God itself points out the immense value of Christian communion with our fellow-creatures. It is that to which this Society invites all who are engaged in the same work as itself; and by bringing before those who are disposed to attend to us, all we can gather from the more favoured localities or schools, through our publications, and correspondence, and personal intercourse, we feel that we are channels of good from one to another. It is not meant that one school should flourish while another a little distance from it is left in isolation and neglect. Let us impart as we have received. How we can do this has been shown by the statement of the visits which have been paid by deputations to various places. Much—I can say this from my own experience, and on behalf of some of my colleagues on the Committee—much, very much, do we enjoy the privilege of occasionally visiting Sunday schools on this errand. Our publications could not be supported without such association; it is necessary that there should be combination and communication between men who are engaged in the work, between those who speak, those who write, and those who listen or read. I know not that I need say any more on that topic. I would most heartily commend the Society to the meeting, being deeply convinced that it is deserving of much more support than it has yet received. It is a matter of pain to us undoubtedly to see its funds neglected. There is, I am sorry to say, a general impression that for a work like ours we need no money at all. Happy indeed would that Society be which never had occasion to send round a collector! Our Society is certainly one that cannot exist without funds. However economically it may be managed, however much gratuitous labour may be given to it—and certainly we need not be afraid of any investigation on that point, nor need the Institute in that respect shrink from a comparison with any other institution whatever—we cannot do without the aid of the pocket and the purse. Let me, then, earnestly commend it to your liberal support, your influence with your friends, and your prayers to God on its behalf. And now, before I sit down, allow me to say a few words on behalf of Sunday schools at large. I sometimes hear an expression of wonder that we should at this time think it necessary to defend Sunday schools. That wonder would cease, if those who feel it heard as often as some of us here do, the opinion that Sunday schools are

not as necessary as they used to be, or observed the half-hearted sympathy which many evince in relation to them. We, on the contrary, contend that Sunday schools were never more necessary than they are now. Again and again have we put before the members of our Church, in the Reports of this Society, that no improvement in the day schools will ever supersede the necessity for Sunday schools. We are told of a time when parents will take their own place. The answer is, let us wait till then, not wait with our arms folded, but doing our work while we wait. It cannot be said that such a time will never come; but it may certainly be said that it has not come yet. In order to prove this it is quite sufficient a point to the fact that the most regular children in our Sunday schools are those whose parents are pious people. They who are the best fitted to give religious instruction are the most glad to receive assistance, not to supersede their own efforts, but in order that those efforts may be supplemented by the act of an intelligent and pious Sunday school teacher. The fact is, that there is such a charm in a well-ordered Sunday school, such power and influence in a well-taught class, that a pious parent will always gladly welcome the assistance thus rendered. I have said that Sunday schools are as necessary as ever. Circumstances which have been alluded to this evening seem to me to show that they are more necessary than ever. The more the mind of the people at large is agitated about various questions, which it would have been better to have left unagitated, the more necessary it is that we should point children to the law and the testimony. Let us mingle with all our instruction, the firm foundation of dogmatic teaching. Let no teacher be afraid to do this. Dogmatic teaching is not necessarily dogmatical teaching. A teacher may lay down great truths without doing it in a dry, uninteresting manner. To prove this, let me refer, for a moment, to the sacred Volume which should always be in his hands. There is, undoubtedly, there all the dogmatic truth which you require. Its history, biography, and poetry, are full of the great truths which concern our eternal welfare. Take the history, take the biography, take the poetry itself, when the children are old enough to enjoy it; use all the various means which God has given you to set the truth faithfully before the minds of the children, and to enforce it from the sacred volume. And this I will say, that when a child's heart is touched, as it may thus be, with the great truths of the Gospel, it is safe. Against the child who has learnt the doctrine of redemption, and felt the power of redeeming grace in his heart, all the doubts, cavils, and attacks of ungodly men will be vain. If a child has once loved the great truth that Christ has died to save it, you need not fear. I know nothing else that will secure a child. No amount of intellectual knowledge will avail against the assaults to which it is subject, and the temptations which it is sure to meet with; but if once, by God's grace, that firm foundation is laid in the child's heart, that child has learnt what will keep it safe and steadfast through life. One word of appeal, in conclusion, to yourselves. I ask of you two things. First, look upon your work, not as a duty, but as a privilege. Look upon each hour that you are permitted to spend in a Sunday school as so much valuable time, during which you have a work to do for God. Make the most of the opportunities that you possess. You know that they are few enough. Life is busy. Let not one Sabbath day go by without some message from the word of God to each of the children in your class. One great source of strength in our system is this, that we combine the power of collective teaching with the power of individual instruction. Our classes are so numbered

and so arranged that we have the power of giving collective instruction; and yet every teacher, who will look out for opportunities, may say something to each child that is especially adapted for it. In order to do this we must of course study the peculiarities of each child; and let it always be our endeavour to utter something that will reach the mind of each. Once more, my friends, I would say, let all of you prize for yourselves the truths you have to teach. Pardon me, if I seem to be assuming here functions which belong to others, but I feel that in these days we need indeed pray earnestly that we may be kept steadfast in the faith. Let us hold fast those great truths which concern our own salvation, and then, if there are difficulties, we shall, at least, have learnt to wait in humility, patience, and faith, until they are cleared up. It will be vain, then, to tell us that Sir Charles Lyell knows more of creation than Moses did; it will be vain to tell us that Bishop Colenso knows more than that Spirit who inspired Moses to write the Pentateuch. We shall reply, "It is perfectly true that there are difficulties in the sacred Volume which we cannot solve, but it would be strange, indeed, if there were not difficulties. Who would believe that the work of an Infinite Mind contained nothing but what a finite mind could grasp? There are difficulties, but we can wait in patience and faith." After the greatest miracle that is presented to us, the miracle that the great Creator should care for us and love us, I know not what other difficulties can be spoken of at which any mind should stagger.

The Resolution, "That the Report now read be adopted and printed, and that the following gentlemen (whose names were read) be the Committee for the year ensuing," was then put to the Meeting and carried unanimously.

The Rev. J. H. TITCOMB said:—I regret that this Society is suffering as regards its funds, not only on account of the limitation of its usefulness which this must cause, but also because it may tend to revive a mischievous opinion which was broached two or three years ago to the effect that it had done its work, and might fairly be laid on the shelf. I believe that the Society has not done its work, and that there is in it very much that we cannot do without. We need it, in the first place, as a depository of Sunday school information for all the members of the Church of England; we need it, also, as a kind of centre or fly-wheel for the regulation of Sunday school movements throughout the country; we need it, as a referee for the settlement of the doubts and difficulties which arise with respect to the administration and management of Sunday schools; we need it as a stimulus to rekindle our love, and zeal, and faith in the work; and, lastly, we need it as a kind of recruiting serjeant to look up fresh teachers, both for boys' and girls' schools. On this last point, let me say that I do not know whether the Committee of this Institute have ever issued an appeal for more teachers. If they have not, I should strongly recommend the issue of an appeal, especially on behalf of boys' schools. Why is it that, in hundreds of boys' schools, classes have to be taught by women instead of men? Why is it that, in many other schools, the teachers are no better than boys? Why is it that the manhood of England's Christianity does not come down as it ought to do to the level of the Sunday school child? Is it considered beneath its attention? Surely souls for which Christ died can never be beneath the attention of any of His professed followers. As Jesus counted not His life dear unto Himself, in order that He might save sinners, so never let us feel that any level of rank or age can be beneath us, or that the time which is given to efforts to save souls can be lost; rather let us feel that it is a great privilege to be allowed to take

any part whatever in this great work. In other Churches than our own the manhood of muscular Christianity, if I may use that expression, is brought to bear on the work of Sunday school teaching. Why is that desirable element wanting in the Church of England schools? I should feel very despondingly if I thought the manhood of England's Christianity was fairly represented in the Sunday schools of our Church. I do not believe it is; nor do I think that the explanation is to be found in a want of love for souls. It strikes me that the cause is that many Christians are not aware of their responsibilities, and not properly instructed in their duties. Why is this? It may be because the pulpit speaks uncertainly on the subject; it may be because this Society has not turned its attention as practically as it should have done to the importance of making direct appeals on this point. At all events there is an evil, and I trust that some remedy will be applied. I should like to put one or two questions to those to whom I am addressing. Are you all engaged, as far as possible, in this great work of teaching on the Sabbath? If any of you are not Sunday school teachers, have you ever examined your consciences as in the sight of God, and asked why you are not? Perhaps you may think that you are not called to the work. But have you seriously asked the question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Have you, as in the sight of God, really investigated the claims of the Sunday school, and do you fully appreciate its bearing on the spiritual life of the nation, and of generations which are yet to come? These are most important questions. I believe there are many well educated and deep-feeling Christian men who, from mistaken notions, or from the want of a due sense of the points on which we feel so strongly, have come at last to persuade themselves that a Sunday school is a vent for a little personal enthusiasm, a kind of ornamental appendage to a parish, not a necessity, and that all that is done is just to teach the very elements of Christianity. It is very important that such false impressions should be removed. How does the case stand? Can we do without the Sunday school? In my opinion we cannot. Viewing it as a matter of taste, no man has a right to say that such work is not to his taste, or that his taste is in another direction. Is a man to use his Christian liberty in that way, when he sees souls around him born to immortality, yet dying in sin, for want of service which he can render? St. Paul sets duties of this kind before us under the metaphor of the human body, where he speaks of Christ as the head, and of all who are Christ's as members. There is, in this case, organization of the Church corresponding to the physical organization of the body. As the physical organization circulates the inward life of the body, so the ecclesiastical organization circulates that spiritual life which is seen in the Christian life of the members of Christ's body. The various parts of our ecclesiastical organization may be divided under two heads. First, there are the Divine appointments:—the ordinance of preaching, the ordinance of public worship, and the sacraments, are divinely appointed members, so to speak, of the ecclesiastical bodily functions—organs by means of which spiritual life is circulated throughout the whole. There is teaching for children, and preaching for those who are full grown; there is worship alike for all. On the other hand, there are parts of the ecclesiastical organization which are of human appointment. There is, for example, district visiting for the masses; and when we come to look at the Sunday school for the young, with a desire to place it on its right basis, we find that it is that development of Church life, or of the organization of the

Church, by which our Church, or any Church that has Sunday schools, is endeavouring, through human instrumentality, to carry out Divine purposes. As a perfect circulation shows a healthy physical life, so perfect circulation also shows a healthy spiritual life. Show me a Sunday school which is taught by Christians who love the truth; show me a school which is taught by those who are seeking to lead souls to the precious Lamb of God; and you show me that which proves that the influence of the Holy Spirit is circulating, not only through the upper, but also through the lower members of the body. With that the organization of the Church is complete; without that it is manifestly incomplete, and no Church, in which it is wanting, can feel that it comprehends all that it ought to comprehend, or that it is satisfactorily discharging the duties which it is bound to perform for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake. Now, this being the foundation of the Sunday school system, we have seriously to ask ourselves to what extent are we thus endeavouring to circulate the Divine life through the body of the Church? Is that our object? When we enter the school, is it our prayer that God would so enable us to explain the doctrines of the Gospel to the children that spiritual life may circulate in their minds? Lacking that as his motive the teacher lacks that which God can alone bless, and which alone can bring glory to Him. I was lately very much interested in a tract, published by the Religious Tract Society, which throws light on this point,—how we circulate the life of Christ Himself when we speak simply, and gently, and tenderly to children, and, taking of the things of Jesus, endeavour to exhibit them as plainly as possible. It related the case of a poor, deformed child, whose heart a devoted teacher was enabled to reach by the help of the Holy Ghost, and through whose instrumentality a most obstinate and perverse infidel was converted to God. That child was dying; and, while she was reading her Bible, her infidel father, who had, up to that time, manifested no relenting of heart, came into her sick chamber. Finding her reading, and seeing that she was overtaxing her strength, her father said, "My dear child, what are you reading? Shall I read for you?" She handed him the book, and, with great love and delight in her face, said, "Father, I am reading the Bible; will you read it to me?" The passage, which she was reading, was in the 14th chapter of the Gospel of St. John, "In my father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you." The father, having read this, closed the book, and said, "Shall I read further?" She placed her poor little wasted arms upon him, and, looking up to him with eyes of love, said, "Father, father, I am going to that place; Jesus has been preparing a place for me; will you ask Him to prepare a place for you, father?" The father looked as if his heart had began to melt; and the poor child, continuing her loving appeal, said to him, "See how kind this dear Saviour has been! He does not say, 'I will send an angel to prepare a place for you,' but He says, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' O father," she added, "it reminds me of when I came from the country, and you met me at the railway station after I had been visiting my uncle. I found my room ready, and you had put some flowers there to greet me. In the same way Jesus is in heaven, making a place ready for me, and oh, do ask Him to make a place ready for you." Her mother came in, and she then persuaded both of them to kneel down for prayer. That child had learnt the value of prayer in a Sunday school. The result was that the heart of the infidel was melted. He could not withstand such appeals; wicked companions were given up one

after another, and he is still living an ornament to Christianity. A minister of the church in which he worships has published this memento of the grace of God, which I have thus referred to for the encouragement of those who are engaged in the work of Sunday school teaching. My dear friends, we circulate Divine life thus; but remember Christian teachers, that your own souls need to be strengthened by God's Holy Spirit, without which nothing is strong, and nothing holy; and unless your motives are pure and simple, unless you desire to circulate the very life-blood of Jesus in the hearts of the children, you can never hope to succeed. It is very much in this work as it is in an Artesian well. You know that, in the case of an Artesian well, water never rises higher than the source from which it springs; and I am quite sure the success of a Sunday school teacher will never rise higher than the motive principle from which his teaching springs. Let your motive spring from the throne of God in heaven, and the results will rise there; but let it be only a human motive, let it be a thing of earth, and it will never rise above the things of earth. In conclusion, I would recommend those who conduct the operations of this Society to look upward, and to lay hold of God's promises, now that things look dark with them, resting assured that those promises are all yea and amen in Christ, and that those who trust in the Lord will find that He is their strong help in the day of trouble.

The Rev. W. SPARROW SIMPSON moved the following resolution:—

"That while acknowledging the success which, under God's blessing, has attended the efforts of the Church of England Sunday School Institute, this Meeting desires to record its conviction that increased efforts should be made to place the Society on a firmer basis, in order that its usefulness may be largely extended."

He said:—I well remember, some fifteen years ago, when I was an undergraduate at Cambridge, hearing Professor Blunt, that godly, self-denying Divinity Professor, who did so much for religion in his day and generation, and who refused so many offers of promotion in the Church, in order that he might continue his useful career at the University—I say, I well remember hearing that admirable man deliver a course of Lectures on the office and duties of a parish priest. He commenced one of his lectures with a description of the difference between two country parishes, in one of which there was a good and efficient day school, and in the other no school at all; and I recollect his observing that an intelligent traveller in passing through a village on the outside of a coach might discover, from the general aspect of the children, whether there was a good school there or not. I must say that my own experience tends to bear out that remark. The effects of a good day school are seen partly in the very countenances of the children; and if that is the case in regard to a day school, how much more must it be so with regard to a Sunday school, in which religious truths are regularly and systematically taught! It is not necessary, I am sure, at this era of the Christian Church, to say one word in favour of lay assistance for the clergy. It is admitted on all hands that, if the Church is to be a strong living power, doing its work in the way in which it ought to be done, the laity must be associated with the clergy in everything that is not strictly clerical. If ever there were a time when the clergy needed the devout and sincere help of the laity they do so now. There are many who are now ever ready to discuss points which ought to be regarded as having been for ever closed. There are many men who, under the pretence of liberality of opinion, are

ready to open fundamental questions, to discuss the verities of the faith itself; and we have found men, high in office and deep in learning, bringing before our notice matters which we had considered by all authorities, ecclesiastical and otherwise, for ever determined. I have observed in a book which has been referred to more than once this evening a very peculiar and distressing symptom; it is that the opinion of the laity is especially demanded on intricate points of Biblical criticism. Now, in almost every other science—and let it never be forgotten that theology is a very deep science—the opinions of experts are held to be of very great importance, if not decisive. In courts of justice experts are often called to give evidence, and if they uniformly give evidence in one direction, that fact is regarded as conclusive. No one thinks of asking persons who are ignorant of the subject to give an opinion, but the matter is left to those whose opinions are known to be of value. You are now told that the laity may decide on the weightiest questions of theology; and you now find laymen raising discussions on the highest and most subtle questions of Divinity with as little hesitation as they would discuss the question of the site of Capernaum, or any historical or geographical doubt. It is then, indeed, necessary that the children of the poor should be rightly instructed, and should learn to submit to the authority of, and to cherish sincere love and affection for that Church of which they are members, so that they may not be led into these quagmires of doubt. The poor, unlearned man can never take up these difficult questions properly. It is enough for him to say, "The saints and godly men of old, the fathers of our own Church, the fathers of our own Reformation, and my own fathers in the faith have lived and died in this glorious and blessed hope, and I will not lose the substance for the shadow." I believe that this is a better line of argument than any appeals to the multiplication table; it appeals to something higher and nobler than dashing statistics. Passing from this subject, let me observe that one most important feature of this Institute is, that it has issued most valuable books, by which a definite system of teaching may be brought to bear on children. It is most important that there should be a definite system of teaching, in order that a teacher may not inculcate his own peculiar opinions, and that everything may be done on a definite plan. All of you must have observed the great difference between schools conducted on definite and fixed principles, and schools conducted with that want of principle which enables every teacher to take up just that line of thought which is peculiar to himself. Just as in our Church Service the Lessons and portions of Scripture are prescribed, in order that the congregation may not be subjected to the caprice of the minister, so the Lessons of the school should be regulated in such a manner that the children will not be subjected to the idiosyncrasies of their teacher. In this respect, teachers who really desire to do their work well will find themselves greatly aided by the publications of this Society. Again, in every Sunday school the teacher should diligently prepare himself for his work. One great object of this Institute is to raise the standard of teachers intellectually and spiritually. The standard must be raised in these two respects simultaneously. Of course, I need not say that unless a teacher be spiritually minded his teaching will be worth nothing; but there must also be intellectual teaching,—the mind and the soul must be cultivated together. The teacher should endeavour to adapt his teaching to his pupils, and to modify it so far as he may find modification necessary. And the solid matter of the Lesson must be diligently

prepared beforehand; for if he goes to the school empty, he may rely upon it the children will go away empty. The profoundest scholar might spend hours in a Sunday school without doing any good to the children, if he had not studied their powers of apprehension; his lesson would fly away over their heads, and be dispersed in thin air. This Institute, by means of its various publications, assists the teacher in giving to each child its portion of meat in due season, adapting himself to its capacity, and performing, in the spirit of love, earnestness, and zeal, the work which he has undertaken. I trust that the result of the appeal now made will be largely to increase the funds of so useful an institution.

The Rev. E. AURIOL, in seconding the resolution, said:—The resolution speaks of the importance of having the Society placed on a firmer basis. Now, when I assisted my friend Mr. Fleet in its formation, nineteen years ago, it was with the belief that it was being then placed on the firmest of all bases—I mean the basis of pure, spiritual, evangelical truth. There can be no firmer basis than that. Then, again, I am sure that the Society has grown up, by means of God's blessing, in a spirit of love, which has cemented together those who have been its conductors; and I am also sure that it has been conducted in a spirit of perseverance, faithfulness, and zeal, which, through the blessing of God has been made the means of great success. The Honorary Secretaries of this Institution are, however, men of business, and I suppose that the basis which they wish to see strengthened is the *financial* basis; they do not wish to get into debt. There may not be any in this room who can give their hundreds, but you can all give your efforts, your prayers, and your influence, in addition to some portion of your means, in order that those who manage the Institute may be relieved from their anxiety in a monetary point of view, and be enabled successfully to continue those labours which have been carried on now for nineteen years. This Society is made up of individual members, and, if it is to have spiritual success, the members, whether they belong to the Sunday schools of this Metropolis, or to the Committee, or to the band of writers for the Institute, must individually be persons who are accustomed to go to a throne of grace, in order that we may have that great source of all blessing, the continual help and teaching of the Holy Spirit. If we seek this in sincerity, and endeavour to work for God, I believe God will, in His providence, take care that the Institute shall not be without the necessary funds.

At the suggestion of the CHAIRMAN, the resolution was amended by the insertion of the word "financial" between the words "firmer basis;" and, with this alteration, it was put and carried.

On the motion of W. SANDBY, Esq., seconded by F. S. CLAYTON, Esq., thanks were voted to the Right Hon. Lord Calthorpe and the Venerable Archdeacon Utterton for presiding, and to the clergymen who had addressed the meeting: as also to the Rev. John Kempthorne for his kindness in presiding at the organ.

The CHAIRMAN having briefly returned thanks, a hymn was sung, and the proceedings terminated with the Benediction.

QUARTERLY RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

DURING the Spring season of the year, when the Anniversaries of the many religious Societies are filling up so large a portion of the time, it has not been the practice to hold many gatherings of the members of the Institute. We have therefore only to report, during the past Quarter, in addition to the proceedings of the Annual Meeting at St James's Hall, already detailed, that

A DEVOTIONAL MEETING

was held at the Rooms of the Institute, on Tuesday evening, the 14th of April, conducted by the Rev. E. AURIOL, M.A.; and that

THE ANNUAL SERMON

was preached at Portman Chapel, Baker Street, on the Afternoon of Ascension Day, the 15th of May, by the Rev. DANIEL MOORE, M.A., Golden Lecturer, and Incumbent of Camden Church, Camberwell. The preacher selected for his text, Rom. viii. 34—"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." After explaining and enforcing the great truths thus referred to, as the subject appropriate to the great festival of the Church which was then celebrated, the reverend gentleman stated the claims of the Sunday School Institute upon the sympathy of Churchmen, and urgently appealed for additional support in its behalf.

TRAINING LESSONS

have been given by Mr. S. B. POWER, on behalf of the Institute, at St. John's, Hoxton; and by Mr. H. G. HEALD, at St. Matthew's Islington; St. Paul's, Balls' Pond; and Newington.

The following books have recently been added to

THE LIBRARY.

for the use of the members:—

Science and Scripture not Antagonistic. By Professor Young.

The Midnight Cry.

Rab and his Friends.

The Two Students.

Mornings beside the Lake of Gennessaret.

Memorials of Bishop Bowen, of Sierra Leone.

The Spirit in the Word. By Canon Champneys.

The Canon of Holy Scripture. By Professor Gaussen.

Last Days of our Lord's Passion.

Parish Papers.

Goode on the Better Covenant.

The Gospel in Madagascar.

Sunday Echoes in Weekday Hours.

British Enterprise beyond the Seas.

The More Excellent Way; or, Links in Love's Chain.

Perils among the Heathen.

The Exodus of Israel. By Rev. T. Birks.

Ragged Life in Egypt. By Miss Whateley.

Waters from the Sanctuary.

My Country: the History of the British Islands.

Recreations of a Country Parson.

Graver Thoughts of a Country Parson.

British Birds in their Haunts.

Praying and Working.

Life of St. Francis Xavier.

Brother Help.

The next

DEVOTIONAL MEETING

will be held (D.V.) on Monday evening, the 13th of July, to commence at half-past seven o'clock.

The following additions to

THE FUNDS

of the Institute have been made during the past quarter:—

DONATIONS.

	£	s.	d.
Thomas Hankey, Esq.	5	0	0
S. Marshall, Esq.	5	5	0

	£	s.	d.
A Friend, April 9th, 1863	2	0	0
The Rev. C. Kemble	3	0	0
The Rev. W. J. Turner	1	0	0
J. D. Crewdson, Esq.	0	10	0
A Lady, Bath	0	5	0
A Sunday school Teacher	0	5	0
W. Cawley, Esq.	0	10	0
St. Jude's, Mildmay, Sunday school	1	1	0
Dr. Wilkinson	0	10	0
H. Wilson, Esq.	2	0	0
R. Dawes, Esq.	25	0	0
Collected at Annual Meeting	21	0	0
Collected at Annual Sermon	8	4	10
NEW ANNUAL SUBSCRIBERS.			
Mrs. Bartlett	1	1	0
Miss C. S. Walker	0	5	0
Miss Preston	1	1	0
W. V. Stevenson, Esq.	0	10	6
NEW SUBSCRIBING SCHOOLS.			
Farnborough, Kent	0	10	6
Minchinhampton	0	10	6

The statement of the affairs of the Institute, made at the Annual Meeting, will show how urgent is its present need of support, both to make good the loss of income it has sustained during the past two years, and also for carrying on unimpaired its course of operations at the present time; indeed, unless such support be given, and that speedily, it is doubtful whether, after nearly twenty years of useful labour, it must not abandon the means of improving and aiding the Sunday schools of our Church, which it has hitherto pursued. Such a course would be a sad disappointment to the managers of the Society, and, as they believe, a loss to the Church itself; they trust, therefore, that God may graciously incline all who are interested in the teaching of the lambs of the flock of Christ to stir themselves up to renewed efforts on behalf of our Institute, since its work is His work, its object His glory.

Notices of Books.

PARSON AND PEOPLE; or incidents in the every-day life of a clergyman: by the Rev. E. Spooner, M.A., vicar of Heston (London: Seeley, pp. 244). This book is a most interesting collection of facts and illustrations of ministerial work and experience: indeed so genial is the spirit of the author, and so lively and graphic is his mode of describing the scenes he has witnessed, his spheres of labour, the characters of his parishioners and others with whom he has been brought into contact, that we might call it a very entertaining one also, if it were not that we should do an injustice by leading our readers to suppose that it was meant merely to amuse, and not to incite to real hearty sympathies with the poor and ignorant, the suffering and tried, and to urge all to use every effort and to devise every means for carrying on the Master's work in whatever form it may present itself.

The several chapters describe very graphically a suburban parish,—the minute truthfulness of which any one who has had experience as a district visitor will be prepared to confirm. The "Institutions" of such a parish are next noticed, showing the many varied agencies needed for bringing the Gospel to bear on *all* the people in it, and the funds necessary to be raised for their support. Two chapters on "our Ragged schools" and "school Chapels" are followed by a lively account of the labours of "a begging parson," which may enlighten some who have hitherto given those so-named little credit, perhaps, for a singleness of purpose, and a spirit of self-negation which few others of like position and sensitiv

feeling would be prepared to exercise. The closing chapters of "Pictures," and the records of "Pastoral Visits" are valuable and striking illustrations of the power of the Gospel and the mode of applying it; but there is something saddening in the description of so much wretchedness, and even tragic in some of the narratives collected together in the latter part of the book.

Nor is the book simply entertaining for its animated and truthful descriptions of real scenes and characters, or only valuable as a record of a good clergyman's labours as a minister of the Gospel,—but it is eminently suggestive in regard to the method by which many of the evils of our present social condition might be removed, and vast improvements effected in the sanitary, moral, and spiritual state of the mass of the population. It is a book which no one interested in social progress or in the spread of the Gospel among our own people can read without profit,—and as such we cordially commend it to the perusal of all concerned in the well-being of their fellow-men.

For the especial benefit of Sunday school teachers we extract a single passage on their own particular branch of Christian labour:—

"But if I can speak with pleasure of our day schools, I can speak most warmly of our Sunday schools. There are thousands who connect with the name of a Sunday school teacher, the idea of a weak young man, or an excitable sensationable young lady; but no idea can be more false. The list of those engaged in Sunday school work in connexion with the Church of England, would indeed be a grand one if it could be printed. It would be headed by many of the noblest in the land; and of my own personal knowledge I could put down the names of a judge, one of our most acute and eminent lawyers, who now regularly after the toils of the week occupies his place in a Sunday school—of another lawyer, whose name is in every one's mouth as one of the leading advocates of the day, who has also for years taught in a Sunday school—of a dear old baronet, lately dead, who could not bear to "miss his class;" and of another dear old baronet, one of the very best informed men of his day, who at nearly eighty years of age takes the first class in his village school every Sunday, morning and evening, and has done so for many years, even when he was a well-known and distinguished member of Parliament. Our boy's Sunday school was for many years superintended by one solicitor, and is now superintended by another, while a third has for a long time managed most admirably a kind of branch school; and I have had amongst my Sunday school teachers an eminent and successful surgeon, a most eminent engraver, a well-known barrister, two or three artists, several articled clerks in law offices, several Bank of England and railway clerks; and others of a like position. Of my lady teachers I could speak as highly, but of both I may say, that I have often most thankfully wondered at the self-denying courage which has enabled those whose heads have been chained to the desk throughout the whole day for week after week, or who have laboured with their hands from six o'clock on Monday morning to six o'clock on Saturday night, to give up their one day of rest to the work of Sunday teaching, to be at school from nine to eleven in the morning, and from three to five in the afternoon.

"We had various Sunday schools—a regular boys', girls', and infants' school in the National school-room; a Sunday school under an enclosed railway arch; two Ragged schools, and a school conducted in a private house for the children of persons in an upper class, who were anxious to have their young ones well and carefully instructed on religious subjects. Of course, one's own time for Sunday school work was but small,

but it did one's heart good to see so noble a band of true-hearted brethren and sisters labouring in the Lord's name. But there is one subject connected with our Sunday schools which I must not pass over, and that was our Sunday school treat. This was the event of the year. On a certain day—generally in June—we borrowed from two kind firms in the neighbourhood a number of their huge vans, and then, having taken a field for the day in some neighbouring village, drove off to enjoy ourselves. The wild joy of the children—how they cheered, how they sang, how they waved their flags, how excited they got with all country sounds and smells, how they revelled in the green lanes and grassy meadows—would fill up many a page, and make a subject worthy of a poem; but I have often regretted that schools, on such occasions, are driven to hire fields belonging to some public-house, or some public suburban place of amusement. If noblemen and gentlemen who have places near London only knew what intense gratification they would confer both on teachers and pupils by allowing them the run of their parks for a day, they would with pleasure bestow the privilege, and the excellent Secretary of the Sunday School Institute, Ludgate Hill, would soon find them a school or schools to take advantage of their kindness; and I will answer for it that they would be utterly astonished at the small amount of injury done to their places, while I cannot attempt to describe the immense amount of pleasure which will be given. On two occasions dear and valued friends of mine own gave us this privilege; and one, a beloved relative, furnished us, also, with fresh milk for the children. Nothing, seemingly, could exceed the delight of the young ones, when, after a good game in the fields and a roll in the hay, which happened to be in a state in which they could not injure it, they were allowed, in regular order, as marshalled by their teachers, to walk through the private gardens and the principal rooms of the mansion. None but town children could have gazed at the trees and flowers as they gazed, and have asked such questions as they asked; but when the new milk came from the dairy, their astonishment knew no bounds. They had never seen, never tasted anything like it, and one pretty little lass came up to me with her mug, and, holding it before me, said, with an inquiring look of deepest earnestness, 'My! teacher, is this milk?'"

THE HISTORIC CHARACTER OF THE PENTATEUCH VINDICATED; a reply to Part I. of Bishop Colenso's "Critical Examination," by a layman of the Church of England (London: Skeffington. 8vo., pp. 206).

That this admirable book should so quickly have reached a second edition is no small proof of its excellence, considering the number of "replies" which the doubts and calculations of the Bishop of Natal have elicited. As far as our own acquaintance with these works go, this is in all respects the best, and alike in its tone, in the mode of conducting the argument, and in arriving at its conclusions, all that can be desired.

It is not possible, in a brief notice of a book characterised by careful research, cautious and critical examination of the whole volume of Scripture, and involving a continuous line of reasoning, to give any idea, by a brief abstract or epitome, of the manner in which it fulfils its purpose; but we can commend it most heartily and conscientously to the attentive study of our readers as a work of permanent value to every Bible student, if only as indicating the mode in which the Scriptures explain themselves, in the historical portions of them, and how clear the truth becomes by analysing it in a devout and reverent spirit, aided by strong common sense, and all the advantages of a knowledge

of such things as may throw light upon its pages.

A pleasing characteristic of the book is the fair and impartial tone in which it is written throughout. No preconceived prejudice, no mere assertion, no clever sarcasm, is substituted for plain reasoning; nor any unfair statement attempted of the views of the author of the book to which it is a reply. "Bishop Colenso" says the writer, "comes before us not as a captious caviller who seeks for objections because he hates the truth; but as a conscientious doubter, who has been driven into the conclusions he adopts against his will. With such an one, especially, we should endeavour to deal fairly and honestly; not distorting or mutilating anything that he say to serve our own purpose, nor imputing aught to him which he does not say; but giving to every statement just that meaning which he himself attaches to it, and no more." Upon this principle the author has acted throughout; and we can learn quite as much of the Bishop's book as we need to know, by the copious extracts from it given in this reply. The rules laid down by the author for his guidance are so useful for all similar enquirers that we state them in "the Layman's" own words:—

"We desire, then, to bring everything to the standard of Scripture, so as to make the narrative explain itself, and either explain its own untruthfulness or demonstrate its own consistency; and in thus dealing with it, we would observe the following rules:—

"1. To receive all its statements in their literal, natural meaning, not despising the minutest details, but accepting every point as true until it be proved to the contrary.

"2. To take the context and general tenour of every passage as the surest guide to its right understanding; illustrating, also, wherever possible, by parallel passages, especially from the same author.

"3. To fill up the gap existing in the narrative in the simplest and most reasonable way, accordant with its requirements, and the analogy of Scripture; yet never according to such assumptions the force or authority of facts, and never insisting on mere silence as a proof of ignorance, except where incredible on any other supposition."

Men can do nothing against the truth but for the truth; and while we cannot but lament the sad consequences to many unsettled in the faith, or hitherto rejecting it, when a Christian bishop sets forth his arguments for determining that the books of Moses are not historically true, yet we cannot but rejoice to find so many, in the ministry, and among the laity, ready to bring the analogy of the Bible itself, and all the proof and power which human knowledge and reason combine to render, as evidences to show that the Pentateuch is an inspired record of real events, — THE WORD OF GOD in the history of His dealings with His people.

Notices to Correspondents.

Contributions are thankfully acknowledged from G. N. S.; Dora; E. S.; Rana; W. H. S.; J. J. M.; J. G. F.; and W. S.; R. T. P.; N.; and "Pansy."

Articles intended for insertion in the next Number should be sent to the Editors not later the end of August.

Church of England

SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY

MAGAZINE.

1ST OCTOBER, 1863.

The Teacher in his Closet.

HANDFUL OF CORN FROM OLD FIELDS.

DEATH.

THE first man that died, died for religion, thus intimating that the reward of the righteous was not in this world.

Death was denounced to man as a curse, yet behold it first lights upon a saint; how soon was it altered by the mercy of that just hand which inflicted it! If death had been evil, and life good, Cain had been slain, and Abel had survived. Now that it begins with him that God loves, "O death, where is thy sting?"

Bishop Hall.

The commendation of a bad thing is its shortness; of a good thing its continuance: it were happy for the damned if their torments knew end, 'tis happier for the saints that their joys are eternal. If man that is born of a woman be full of misery, 'tis well that he hath but a short time to live: if his life be a walk of pain, 'tis a blessing that his days are but a span long. Happy miseries that end in joy: happy joys that know no end: happy end that dissolves in eternity!

Arthur Warwick, 1637.

THE DYING MOTHER.

We were weeping round her pillow,
For we knew that she must die;
It was night within our bosoms—
It was night within the sky.

There were seven of us children—
I, the oldest one of all;
So I tried to whisper comfort,
But the blinding tears would fall.

On my knee, my little brother
Leaned his aching brow and wept,
And my sister's long black tresses
O'er my heaving bosom swept.

The shadow of an awful fear
Came o'er me as I trod,
To lay the burden of our grief
Before the throne of God.

"Oh! be kind to one another,"
Was my mother's pleading prayer,
As her hand lay like a snow-flake,
On the baby's golden hair.

Then a glory bound her forehead,
Like the glory of a crown,
And in the silent sea of death,
The star of life went down.

Her latest breath was borne away
Upon that loving prayer,
And the hand grew heavier, paler,
In the baby's golden hair.

Alice Carey.

Remember that you are now in the waning, and the date of your pilgrimage well nigh expired, and now that it behoveth you to look towards your country; your force languisheth, your senses impair, your body droops, and on every side the ruinous cottage of your faint and feeble flesh threateneth to fall: and having so many harbingers of death to premonish you of your end, how can you but prepare for so dreadful a stranger? Wherefore, good sir, make no longer delays; but being so near the breaking up of your mortal house, take time, before extremity, to pacify God's anger. Though you suffered the bud to be blasted, though you permitted the fruits to be perished, and the leaves to dry up; yea though you let the boughs to wither, and the body of your tree to decay, yet (alas) keep

life in the root, for fear lest the whole tree become fuel for hell-fire: for surely where the tree falleth, there it shall lie, whether towards the south, or to the north; to heaven, or to hell; and such sap as it bringeth forth, such fruit shall it ever bear.

Sir. W. Raleigh.

THE DEATH-BED.

We watched her breathing thro' the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life,
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers,
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied,—
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed,—she had
Another morn than ours.

Hood.

Death in its mildest form is terrible to look at. Gild it, paint it with vermilion as you may, it is a ghastly object. We shrink from dying. Faith in Jesus can indeed bear the heart upon its towering pinion above the fear and humiliation of death, yet the awful accompaniments of the final hour will at times crowd upon the view, and cause the Christian soldier to quake, and tremble, and misgive.

H. Bonar.

Mysterious Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet, 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus, with the host of heaven came,
And lo! creation widened in man's view.
Who would have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun, or who could find,
Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife,
If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life?

Blanco White.

While we hear even hardened Pharoah under the dread of immediate destruction, not only consenting to let the Lord's people go, according to the utmost demands of Moses and Aaron, but even entreating them to bless him also, we may know what in general to think of the confessions and pious language which are extorted from many wicked men, when death affrights them; and which being injudiciously attested as genuine repentance by some Christians and ministers, often give encouragement to others to procrastinate, in hopes of being saved at last in the same manner.

Scott.

Some talk bravely about death, and of encountering it with great natural courage, or upon high philosophical principles. These may indeed defy or meet the sting: but they can neither soften nor take it away. For a sinner to bully death, with no spiritual life in his soul, and no everlasting life in reversion, is the act of a desperate madman, who laughs at a horrible precipice before him, and rushes down headlong to destruction.

Ambrose Serle.

Thou art gone to the grave, but we will not deplore thee,
Though sorrows and darkness encompass the tomb;
The Saviour has passed through its portals before thee,
And the lamp of His love is thy guide through the gloom.

Thou art gone to the grave—we no longer behold thee,
Nor tread the rough path of the world by thy side;
But the wide arms of Mercy are spread to enfold thee,
And sinners may hope, since the Sinless has died.

Thou art gone to the grave—and its mansions forsaking,
Perhaps thy tried spirit in doubt lingered long;
But the sunshine of heaven beamed bright on thy waking,
And the song which thou heardst was the seraphim's song.

Thou art gone to the grave—but 'twere wrong to deplore thee,
When God was thy Ransom, thy Guardian and Guide;
He gave thee, and took thee, and soon will restore thee;
And death hath no sting, since the Saviour hath died.

Bishop Heber.

He that waits upon God is ready whensoever He calls. Neglect not to set your accounts even: he is a happy man who so lives, as that death at all times may find him at leisure to die.

Feltham.

"Fool! fool! fool!" were the last words of one on his dying bed, who it is to be feared had procrastinated his repentance too long and too fearfully; while the humble Christian, sensible of a thou-

sand failings and imperfections, still looks with the eye of faith on his Redeemer, and his soul, like the flight of an eagle towards the heavens, soars to the regions of everlasting happiness.

Jesse.

Of the great number to whom it has been my painful professional duty to have administered in the last hour of their lives, I have sometimes felt surprised that so few have appeared reluctant to go to the undiscovered country "from whose bourne no traveller returns." Many, we may easily suppose, have manifested this willingness to die from an impatience of suffering, or from that passive indifference which is sometimes the result of debility and bodily exhaustion. But I have seen those who have arrived at a fearless contemplation of the future from faith in the doctrine which our religion teaches. Such men were not only calm and supported, but cheerful in the hour of death: and I never quitted such a sick chamber without a hope that my last end might be like theirs.

Sir Henry Halford, M.D.

"TOGETHER WITH HIM."

"WHO died for us that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him." Well might the Apostle add after such words as these, "Wherefore comfort yourselves together." Some of those we love have, it may be, "fallen on sleep," but if they sleep in Jesus, and we live in Him, there is no real separation, the bond is not severed for an instant, the life which has been imparted by the power of the Holy Spirit of God is eternal life, and it flows from one Head into members which henceforth cannot die. They may indeed "sleep" in relation to this lower world, but they are "at home with the Lord," and we though we "wake" are still "with Him."

A few weeks since I was summoned to the dying bed of a young woman whom I had not seen since early girlhood. She was remembered as always gentle and affectionate toward myself, but somewhat haughty and reserved in general. Rapid consumption had brought her in a very few weeks to the verge of the grave, but He who is "the Life" had manifested Himself to her, and I found her rejoicing "in hope of the glory of God." Very gratefully she referred to advantages she had received, very tenderly she spoke of an orphan sister and brother whom she must leave behind, very lovingly she acknowledged the christian kindness of many friends, but this was the prospect which

lighted up her face with smiles and kindled in her eye an unearthly radiance, "I shall soon be with Christ, *Oh! so far better*." For a brief hour we communed of present peace and coming glory, not a shadow rested on the fair sweet face, her life was hid with Christ in God, beyond the reach of any to touch it, and very soon after that interview she knew by experience how indeed it was "far better" to be with Him whom she had learned to love.

There is no suspension of union with those who die in the Lord. The Church militant shares in the same life as the Church triumphant. They rest, we labour; they rejoice, we mourn; they wave the palm-branch, we draw the sword; they are "where the wicked cease from troubling," we rise to a daily conflict; "more happy" they may be, but not "more secure" than we are; our life is identical with theirs, it rises from the same spring, it flows from the same fountain, "whether we wake or sleep we *live together with Him*."

Dear friends, we to whom it is given to gather around us the young, and to instruct them in the way of the Lord, let this be our prayer for each of our classes individually, "Oh that" he or she, "may *live* before Thee." To discipline these children or young people to habits of order, attention, and obedience; to furnish their minds with Scripture facts; to give them a friend to whom they may turn for counsel in difficulty,—all these and such as these are collateral advantages not to be despised, but they are not the aim of the true Sunday School Teacher. We must realise the condition of our classes as being composed of the spiritually *dead*, we must have known ourselves what it is to be "quickened together with Christ," we must feel, in comparison with the solemn question of *life* or *death* all else to be "a grand impertinence," ere we shall have such a sense of our own insufficiency as will compel us to lay hold on Christ's strength, and with a faith which believes that "it is not the will of our Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish," and a persevering prayer which will not faint, we shall "lift up our hands toward Him for the life of the young children." Yes, for their *life*, for nothing less. It is not ours to give, but it is ours to seek, with the faith and love and unselfish effort of those who, when our Lord was below, brought their children and friends to lay at His feet, and who were never sent away without a blessing, though their faith might be tried and their patience exercised. "I am come," are His own gracious words, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Let us seek this more abundant life first for ourselves and then for all over whom we have influence, or for whose souls we are, in measure, responsible, that we and they being alike partakers of Christ's life, may calmly look onward to the separations which time, as it rolls on, is ever making, and from which we shrink as the

bitterness of death, and having borne "the burden and heat of the day," "*together with Him*," may cheerfully lay down ourselves, or commit our loved ones to their rest, glad in the thought that believing in Christ we do not die, but that "whether we wake or sleep, we still "LIVE TOGETHER WITH HIM."

Beta.

PRESS ON.

Be brave, my brother!
Fight the good fight of faith
With weapons proved and true;
Be faithful and unshrinking to the death;
Thy God will bear thee through:
The strife is terrible,
Yet, 'tis not, 'tis not long;
The foe is not invincible
Though fierce and strong.

Be brave, my brother!
The recompence is great,
The kingdom bright and fair:
Beyond the glory of all earthly state,
Shall be the glory there.
Grudge not the heavy cost,
Faint not at labour here,
'Tis but a lifetime at the most,
The day of rest is near.

Be brave, my brother!
He whom thou servest, slights
Not e'en his weakest one:
No deed, tho' poor, shall be forgot,
However feebly done.
The prayer, the wish, the thought,
The faintly spoken word,
The plan that seemed to come to nought,
Each has its own reward.

Be brave, my brother;
Enlarge thy heart and soul;
Spread out thy free glad love,
Encompass earth, embrace the sea,
As does that sky above.
Let no man see thee stand
In slothful idleness,
As if there were no work for thee
In such a wilderness.

Be brave, my brother!
Stint not the liberal hand,
Give, in the joy of love;
So shall thy crown be bright, and great
Thy recompence above;
Reward,—not like the deed,
That poor weak deed of thine;
But like the God Himself who gives,
Eternal and divine.

"Hymns of Faith and Hope," by Dr. H. Bonar.

NOISE AND QUIETNESS.

When we speak of the disadvantages of a life in a great city, as compared with one in the country, the most prominent ones which occur to our minds are the noise and bustle by which we are surrounded, the multitude of sounds by which our quiet is disturbed, and the turmoil which prevails on all sides, tending irresistibly to excite our minds and spirits. While remembering these inevitable impressions, how pleasant it is to be transported to the quiet country, where all is peaceful tranquillity; where we can live comparatively alone in the world, without jostling our fellow creatures in our struggles through the crowd, our ears drinking in the sounds of the songs of birds or the gentle breath of the wind as it rustles through the trees, our eyes resting only on quiet scenes of nature's handiwork, and the bright sky above us.

The same thankful feeling of rest and repose which is created by such a transition, fell to my share as a Sunday school teacher very lately. I had been engaged in instructing a class in a very large Metropolitan school, where I often found it difficult to hear my own voice, in consequence of the noise which prevailed around me, and where all the efforts of the Superintendent seemed to be in vain to preserve order or quiet. I am far from thinking that noise is a necessary evil in a Sunday school; and I am quite sure, from long experience, that the amount of good effected is very considerably diminished wherever it prevails. We can easily see that there is no reverence where all is noise and confusion; indeed quietness seems on essential preliminary to anything like devotion. "The Lord is in His holy Temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him" (Hab. ii. 20). "Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord" (Zech. ii. 13). These and many other passages point to that which our own experience confirms,—that if we would solemnize our thoughts, and

prepare our hearts to be taught by God, or to hold communion with Him, it must first be by the stillness which is here enjoined.

But besides the necessity for quiet in order to enable us to realize the presence of God in prayer or praise, it is also essential in securing the attention of those who are taught. Not only are the teachers perplexed and distracted by the turmoil around them, but their classes are incapable of receiving the instruction they are able to give. Their restlessness, the constant incitements to wandering thoughts, eyes, and ears, which abound on all sides, divert them from the subject of their lesson, and effectually check anything like serious impressions. The school-time comes to an end, leaving a painful impression on the anxious teacher's mind that he has been beating the air, that he has failed, often to be heard, always to be attended to with that thoughtful seriousness which alone can give him reason to hope that his words will find a way into his scholars' hearts.

With some such feelings as these, I found myself depressed while in London, but a week or two afterwards I was far away in the country, and, as is my habit, on Sunday I bent my steps towards the village school. It was a great contrast in every way to the scene of my usual labours. The gentle river flowed with scarcely a sound or a ripple, at a short distance from our place of assembly; the trees peered through the open windows, and the wind rustled softly among the branches; high rocks rose up on the opposite banks of the stream, clothed with verdure, but here and there white crags cropped up to the surface, showing how scanty was the soil in which the foliage grew. The room itself was a model of a village school-room, and the children were ranged about it in order, but without formality. Girls and boys in separate classes, occupied different parts of the room, and it seemed to me that the mingling of the two tended to soften down that roughness of manner which boys are apt to exhibit when assembled separately; while, I fancy, that even the teachers in the boys' school were unconsciouly led to modulate their voices, that they might not interrupt, by the loudness of their teaching, the ladies whose classes were so near to them. However this may be, we assembled the little company in perfect order, the prayers were read without a sound of interruption, and the teaching was carried on in such a subdued tone, that while the whole produced that pleasant hum of voices which proved that earnest work was going on, it fell far short of that confused noise which we hear in our large boys' schools in London.

Perhaps my readers may think my contrast an unfair one—a small village school of mixed boys and girls being placed in juxta-position with a large school of London boys only. Undoubtedly, I ought not

to expect the one to be *as* quiet as the other; but I think we ought all to try to obtain *as much* quiet as possible, as well for our own sakes as for the benefit of our scholars. It is not all to be left to the superintendent: it is a difficult work for him to restore order, when it is lost; but it is not so difficult for the teachers to preserve it. He rings his bell, knocks on his desk, or sounds his whistle to command silence and attention; there is a temporary lull, but in a moment or two all falls back again into the same confusion, and neither by threats of detention after school hours, nor by abruptly calling for periods of cessation from teaching, and for perfect listlessness till silence is obtained, can peace be restored. Fretful submission may be enforced by such means, but it is only temporary, and the restraint is broken through as soon as possible. Far better to appeal, by a few words of kindly but strict exhortation, to the good sense and right feeling of the elder boys, and to look to the teachers to secure sufficient command over the younger ones. Indeed, it is to the teachers chiefly that I would look to remedy such a state of things, wherever it exists. By their timely presence, a little while before the opening school service, they can engage their boys in a quiet conversation, or, at least, hinder any noisy talk among themselves; in the opening school service they can keep a watchful eye upon their class, while taking their own part in the prayers; and, in the time alloted to teaching, they can keep the voices of their scholars subdued, and repress that loud boisterous reading or repetition which is so annoying to surrounding classes; while, by thus preserving comparitive quiet in the class, they will not need to raise their own voices so loud in speaking to their boys as to interrupt any of their fellow-workers close by. I especially refer to the last point, as it is one not sufficiently remembered; for, although I would not go so far as to say with Pope, that "it is with narrow-souled people as with narrow-necked bottles—the less they have in them the more noise they make in pouring it out," yet I have observed that the most skilful teachers are always those who make *least* noise in imparting instruction to their classes.

While I am anxious to urge upon my fellow-labourers the importance of obtaining comparative quietude in their classes, to enable them to carry on their work as teachers of God's truth, yet I am desirous, on the other hand, to guard against the wrong impression, on the opposite side, that if a class be kept from making a noise, and well-disciplined by the constant preservation of order, the great aim of the Sunday-school teacher has been attained. For, while it is quite true that no effectual religious instruction can be given in the midst of noise and inattention, it is also true that the mere exercise of discipline can never be a substitute for it; although nothing can

be done without discipline, it is nothing in itself, or except as it enables us to communicate more effectually the knowledge of Divine things to our scholars. No superintendent will be satisfied in feeling that he is a sort of policeman to the school,—that his hours of rest on the Sabbath are to be devoted to the mere drudgery of keeping silence or repressing disturbance. He wishes to be engaged in God's work on God's holy day, and all he does should be with the fixed purpose of drawing the children under his charge nearer to their heavenly Father, and to the knowledge and love of their Saviour. In the spirit of Christian tenderness, not unmixed with the strictness and severity of truth and right, as opposed to falsehood and error in any of their forms, he will speak to the children, exhorting them to reverence the Lord's day as one of great happiness, to read the Bible as the word of the living God, to join in the prayers offered up to Him as if they were visibly in His presence, to sing His praises with reverent voice and thankful heart, and to learn from their teachers how to walk in the ways of holiness and the paths of peace. Either for superintendents or teachers in a Sunday-school to be satisfied with a lower standard than this, is obviously to derogate from the real position they occupy as fellow-workers with the ministers of Christ in feeding the lambs of the flock. Each time we assemble, it is to promote the Saviour's kingdom, and to win souls for Him. Let this thought animate both superintendents and teachers alike, and they will feel that rightly to enter into the spirit of their work, they will need to be themselves in a calm and tranquil state of mind, and that they can only impart a like feeling to the scholars by first ensuring that cessation of noisy confusion by which all such impressions are effectually excluded from the Sunday-school.

S. A. W.

THE LIGHT OF LIFE.

The hours have passed of silent night,
With all their sweet repose,
And now the sun's bright cheerful light
High o'er the mountain glows;
Angels above, with gladsome heart,
Loud hallelujahs sing;
Creatures below, come, bear a part,
To praise the heavenly King.
Night is for rest,—for work the day,
'Tis ours to use it well,
If sorrows drive our hopes away,
Or joys our grief dispel:

Then in our joy or in our woe,
  May each, by heaven's light,
Tread the strait path of life below,
  As in our Father's sight.

The night which veils the earth and sky,
  Points to a brighter morrow;
'Tis gone, it only dims our eye,
  Like passing tears of sorrow:
Spirit of Light, thro' life's dark way
  Be thou our cheering guide,
For what shall tempt our feet astray,
  If Thou with us abide?
And when Death comes and dims our sight,
  And calls this life away,
Lord, grant that we may see the light
  Of everlasting day.

Cheltenham. W. B. S.

SYMPATHY.

SYMPATHY—genuine, deep, and active—is one of the brightest and noblest of the Christian graces; and it is one of the rarest. Without it, as St. Paul reminds us, a man may display the heroism of a martyr, and the generosity of a philanthropist, and yet both his heroism and his generosity be utterly worthless. It is not the stern resolution that will BEAR, nor the ready profuseness of an open hand that delights to GIVE,—it lies far deeper, it is the thrill of the heart that has learnt to forget itself, and to realise the experience of others. Even the heaven-born quality of Mercy fails in its mission if Sympathy be wanting; for Mercy looks, indeed, with deep compassion on the lost offender, breaks his chain and sets him free; but it is SYMPATHY that follows him back to his polluted and disgraced home, and devotes itself to the task of comforting, strengthening, and restoring the pardoned one. And as for the difference between these two, I need only refer to the experience of those of my readers (and who will be exempt?) who, when humbled by a sense of guilt, and then comforted by the assurance of pardon, have also felt that they were NOT LEFT ALONE to fall again unaided, but that He who pardoned still followed the humbled penitent, not only bidding but HELPING him to sin no more. We are not left to think of God as only a far-off Judge before whose bar we stood trembling, and heard the glad accents of Divine compassion and forgiveness; if that were all, despair would soon return. No! but the whole history of an incarnate Redeemer shows us the

ever-present Friend who has not only blotted out our sins by His own precious blood, but has determined never to leave us nor forsake us, perfect in the sympathy that He gained by becoming actually one of us, partaker of our flesh and blood. For thirty years He mingled in the quiet scenes of private human life; for three more He was found amidst the most public places of resort, and in constant intercourse with men of every stamp. There are no phases of human nature unknown to Him—no depths of feeling that He has not sounded, no secret emotions that He has not detected; no subtle motives that He has not unravelled. And, perfect in His knowledge, He is perfect in sympathy. It is as if a physician, walking through a vast hospital, crowded with sufferers from every variety of disease, knew at a glance the real state of each one by having been himself attacked, and knew also the remedy. How our Saviour CAN so feel WITH as well as for those whose moral and spiritual maladies must necessarily be so terribly hateful to His pure sinless nature, is indeed one of the mysteries that we cannot fathom; but we dare not refuse to take Him at His own word, and as we mourn under the burden of our multiplied infirmities, we rejoice to know that He will not therefore spurn us, but rather count our utter weakness the strongest reason for helping us.

"Go AND SIN NO MORE." What should we think of this, if we had not His aid? But when He adds, "My grace is sufficient for thee," hope revives.

The teacher that would be like his great Example, must seek this spirit. It does not come naturally to many of us; for if I have made clear the distinction between feeling for and feeling with our charge, it will be allowed that we are very far from the spirit of our Master's sympathy. Children come under our notice, and our care. We know, perhaps, how injurious the influence at home may be, and thus we feel for them. It is a step in the right direction, but another needs to be taken to feel with them.

What are the sources of this sympathy? What will be its inward and outward work? What its results?

I.—The sources of sympathy lie not on the surface. *There* we may, indeed, find that sentimentalism that drops its tear over human misery when forced on its sight, but gladly forgets it when unseen. There, also, we may find the semi-selfish desire to heal those wounds of others that spoil *our own* comfort by the evidence of suffering. How many of us, alas! even with far nobler minds than such poor feelings evince, are yet very stoical about the misery of our fellow-creatures, so long as it lies hid in courts, cellars, and prisons, or out-of-the-way hamlets, and does not thrust itself on our notice like Lazarus at Dives' gate.

Far deeper, and far purer, are the thoughts and feelings that form themselves into the sympathy I am speaking of. The heart that thus truly feels for and with others must first have experienced (and that acutely) its own wants; must have known the oft-repeated cycle of sin, suffering, and restoration. No one human mind can, indeed, thoroughly fathom another: many think they can do this, and pride themselves on a wonderful penetration of character because they have, sometimes, succeeded in predicting what others would say or do in certain circumstances. But, after all, the heart knows its own bitterness and its own joys. Yet those who have had much consciousness of that secret inner life (for too many are strangers to themselves), who have traced with intense interest the varying strife of good and evil, the power of temptation, the self-reproaches of the fallen, the longing for recovery and triumph, —these are the ones to find the analogy between themselves and others, and to sympathise with those who are fighting the same long and wearisome battle. Yes, it is in our own life we learn what others are, what others do, or suffer; and they that avoid heart-searchings of their own, will be equally strangers to the inward character of others. To know one's self has been described as a lesson learnt from heaven; and it is certainly true that such a knowledge is also the first element of the sympathy that is learnt in the same school.

But, as that lesson is fatally incomplete if it ends in self-knowledge, failing to be followed by the knowledge of a Redeemer, so in its aspect as regards others, to feel with them in their struggles or their fall is worse than useless, unless we can tell them of a redemption that we have found for ourselves. In other words, he who on the brink of a precipice has felt the arm that saved him from destruction, and keeps his memory of the danger and the deliverance fresh, can never look unmoved on those whom he sees straying carelessly into the same peril. And when the daily need of a Saviour, and the daily rich supply of that need, are felt ever vividly, there will be also the constant deep yearning for the souls of others who have the same necessities,—most of all for those who seem to be trifling away the golden opportunities that can never be recalled.

II.—A genuine sympathy sprung from such a source will never lack outward manifestations. Its work, in the world, may be modified by personal character, or controlled by circumstances, but it will as surely find work to do as a healthy body will make or find exercise. It cannot spend itself, like the mere sentimentality I have already alluded to, in sighs, regrets, or vain lamentations. Such miserable imitations can never satisfy an earnest heart, a heart that

knows its own salvation to have been purchased by a Life of devotedness, and a Death of self-sacrifice. To such an one, heaven and hell, death and the judgment to come, are solemn realities, and the fate of each immortal spirit a matter of deeper moment than any imaginable affairs that concern this world alone. A man of science almost unconsciously measures the acquisitions of every one that approaches him; an artist marks with deep interest the development of his own beloved pursuit in the works of his fellow-students; a statesman, as part of his very profession, estimates the skill and power of every one engaged in the same path of life. Far more surely, and with infinitely more earnest anxiety, the heart of the Christian ponders the spiritual state of every one around, not in mere aimless curiosity, nor in proud, self-complacent desire for comparison, but with the unquenchable longing that ALL may come where life eternal may be had for the seeking. I stop not now to urge one mode more than other of accomplishing good for our fellow-creatures, nor even to dwell upon the duty; my wish has been rather to point out that the efficient discharge of that duty, whether in the Sunday-school or in any other sphere, will, in the first place, depend on the true and heartfelt sympathy we have for our fellow-creatures.

III.—The results of that sympathy are part of the triumphs of the Gospel. When Andrew brought his brother to the Messiah as the immediate fruit of his own conversion, we may say that brotherly love strengthened the Christian sympathy. We need not go far for noble instances of the like sympathy where no such natural ties existed; and in those finely pathetic narratives that set forth the Apostle Paul parting for ever on earth from the adopted children of his apostolic love, we see what this heaven-born sympathy could do to weld in one the hearts of the gathered company of believers, of diverse birth and nationality, nursed in foreign ways, and little used to catholicity of spirit, who yet learned to own the spell that bound them to their noble-minded friend, until of all present griefs they felt the chief to be that they should see his face no more.

In their deep, undying love, in his pure and lofty attachment, in their tears, in his prayers, in their steadfastness, in his devotedness, in the triumphs of the Gospel, and in the sublime joy of him, its great herald, we see the results of the sympathy I have tried to pourtray. Earth has no finer human example. For aught more grand we must seek the Divine,—must look back to the immeasureable sympathy of the last Prayer (John xvii.), and look forward to the Day when He who uttered it will gather the blessed objects of

such sympathy in the many mansions of His Father's house; and THUS, to use language that the word of God puts into our lips, "will be SATISFIED."

God grant to us all more and more of our Master's sympathy, wrought in us and through us, to His own glory!

E. G. F.

WHO WILL HELP?

How frequently do we hear an appeal for "more teachers, more help," in our Sunday schools, especially those in the surrounding neighbourhood of London, where the population is so continually increasing! There is no lack of children,—they flock from every direction; they are as sheep needing shepherds; their souls are fainting; they are thirsting for religious instruction; they are ready and waiting to hear the word of life, and when they hear it they often respond with glowing hearts and glistening eyes. Still the demand for teachers is great. Help! help! is the never ceasing cry from many a school.

And in proportion to this need, so great is the welcome for every fresh accession to a band of teachers,—for every one who comes forward with a real desire to do good, and to spread the kingdom of God. It is expected that such will be already possessing Piety, in its germ at least, even if it be not fully developed; for no one should undertake this office without first knowing the Saviour himself, experiencing that He is precious, and *therefore* desiring to bring others to Him,—thus participating in the feeling of one of the early disciples, who when he began to follow Jesus, immediately spoke of Him with gladness to his friends, and brought another to Him. "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias. And he brought him to Jesus."

But in first starting on this occupation, much consideration is needful. How may the earnest Christian teacher best enter on it, so as to prove a really valuable help, not only to the school by lightening the labours of the other teachers, but also to the little ones placed under his care by leading them into the way of everlasting life? To sum up the leading qualifications requisite for this noble work, let him enter on it,

HUMBLY,
EARNESTLY,
LOVINGLY,
PRAYERFULLY,

These four thoughts will not merely give the word HELP by the succession of their initial letters, but will prove true Help, lasting Help.

Humility is the first requisite for a teacher. For the more we consider the work we are about to undertake, in all its bearings, with all its high and lofty objects, and yet with all its difficulties and probable trials, the more we shall feel we are not equal to it, we are not worthy of it, we mistrust ourselves, and say, "This is indeed a privilege to be permitted thus to labour in the Lord's vineyard, but who am I? What can I do? How can I be of use? So great is the work! So great the Lord for whom I would work!" We seem to feel as John the Baptist, whose office was high indeed, his privilege great in the extreme, in that he was sent from God as His special messenger, to prepare the way of the Lord, to make ready for the Saviour's coming; yet in the midst of his labours he expressed himself to be as no one, as nothing in comparison of Him of whom he testified, "He it is who coming after is preferred before me, whose shoes latchet I am not worthy to unloose." But the more deeply this unworthiness is felt, the more will the Christian labourer seek the aid of the Great Teacher, and cry, "Holy Spirit, teach me, that I may teach the children under me." He will also humbly and willingly be guided by those who have laboured longer in the field than himself, gladly receiving advice and information from whatever source of improvement may be within his reach, whether from the Superintendent, or his fellow-teachers, from friends, from books, or from observations on the circumstances of daily life. The most truly Christian teacher is the most humble, and most ready to learn.

But if a teacher would be successful he must be in *Earnest*: begin heartily, go on perseveringly. It is a glorious work, worthy of our best energies and devotedness of purpose, and we must therefore throw our whole heart and soul into it. It is not a thing to be done by halves, to be taken up and put down at will, as soon as difficulties arise; to grow cold as soon as the novelty wears off. No! an earnest teacher will never do this. His mind will be so filled with the inexpressible value of each immortal soul before him that he will be urged on to the most untiring efforts to work while it is called to-day, to do what he can while he can, till he determines, and exclaims aloud, "I will spend and be spent in God's service." And what an example of earnestness does the Apostle St. Paul set us! ever going from place to place, preaching to every one, with but one errand, one thought uppermost in his mind, "Christ and Him crucified."

And then a *loving* sympathy will be manifested by the Christian teacher! Love to Christ, love to souls! love to the work, love to the children! He who really feels what an eternity hangs upon the

opportunity thus offered him for bringing them to Christ, will yearn over them, with a loving heart, be drawn to them while speaking the glad message of love, kindling a smile and a beam of joy, while his words sink deeper and deeper into their hearts, as they see by the glance of the eye, the tone of voice, and the sympathizing manner that their teacher cares for them, and tells them these things out of love for their souls. Two sentences told them out of pure love, will take deeper root, and produce greater response than the best arranged lesson delivered with coldness, or even an earnest appeal delivered with studied effect where sympathy is wanting. Ah! how lovingly did our Lord teach! In His words, in His acts, in His looks, compassionate love and sympathy shone forth.

"In whom the fulness dwells of love Divine.
* * * His meek aspect,
Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love
To mortal man!"

This love it was that brought Him down, this love that led Him to so many acts of mercy while here.

"Oh! unexampled love,
Love nowhere to be found less than Divine."

Let us imitate this spirit of love, let us cherish it, let us seek it.

But the teacher can do nothing without *Prayer*. All these qualifications may be good and necessary, but without prayer they can never be attained. Without prayer there can be no success; without prayer no life! Prayer is the very breath of the Christian teacher; earnest prayer, frequent prayer, pleading prayer—prayer for ourselves, for wisdom, zeal, influence, and guidance of the Holy Spirit: prayer for our scholars, collectively and individually; prayer for a blessing on every little plan we may adopt; prayer for direction in every difficulty that may arise. Bring everything to God in prayer; lay the matter fully before Him; in everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known unto God, and a blessing will assuredly follow. Prayer is the beginning of zeal, of wisdom, of power. Was it not after St. Paul had been deeply engaged in prayer at the time of his conversion that he came forth so boldly and zealously, preaching Christ in the synagogues, increasing more in strength, teaching and preaching boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus? And he was always eminently a man of prayer, and hence his success.

These four thoughts having been suggested as useful when first commencing Sunday school teaching, a few points might be added as desirable to be kept in view by the *earnest* teacher as rules, to be pondered over from time to time after we have engaged in our duties. Some have reference to our private edification—the necessary pro-

gress of our own soul, and also the source whence we may derive support and encouragement in our labour of love: others refer more directly to our position in the school-room, as in connection with our scholars, both as regards teaching them, with salvation ever in view; and also as regards training them, always directing them by the eye, and dealing with them according to their various dispositions.

1.—E mbrace every opportunity of self-improvement.

2.—A im at nothing short of the salvation of each soul, pointing to the Saviour.

3.—R ule with firmness and kindness united, governing as far as possible with the *eye*.

4.—N ever despair of future success, whatever be the difficulties and discouragements.

5.—E ver look upwards and onwards for help and encouragement, hoping to the end.

6.—S tudy the character of each child, and deal with him accordingly.

7.—T rain as well as teach—

EARNEST.

"Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Clapton. F. C. S.

ANECDOTE.

THE learned teacher of a Sunday school in the North, was one day, lately, endeavouring to prove to the pupils the existence of a Divine Being, as illustrated by the peculiar adaptation of the structure of every animal to the country and climate it was destined to inhabit. After lecturing for some time upon this subject he exclaimed, with much eloquence, "But why go to the icy Pole, or to the burning plains of Africa for examples to prove this important subject? Is not man himself an excellent example of the power and wisdom of the Divine hand? Had he been born with a fleece upon his back, it is true he might have been comforted by its warmth in the icy regions of the north, but what would have become of him in tropical countries, or under the equator?" One of the pupils thinking the last question more especially directed to himself answered, with evident simplicity, "They could clip him."

John o' Groat's Journal.

The Teacher in his Study.

ON THE STUDY OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

III.

HITHERTO we have considered the Gospels merely as writings, examining their genuineness and authenticity, the sources of their compilation, and their respective designs and characteristic features. But we cannot forget that all this is but the shell, and that the kernel is yet untouched. To combine their fourfold testimony, and to study the life, character, and teaching, of Him whom they unite in presenting to us, is a far higher task. In the limited space yet at my disposal, I can but attempt to indicate the outline of such a course of study.

At the very threshold of the examination, it would be indispensable to form as clear an idea of the life of Christ in its historical sequence, as the casual notes of time and place in the four narratives will permit. And though it is a common thing to depreciate the efforts which have been made by Greswell, Robinson, and others, to construct a harmony of the Gospels, I venture to say, while allowing the extreme doubtfulness of one or two contested points, that it is possible to form a fair general idea of the course of events, and that without this we shall lose much of the valuable instruction the Saviour's life affords. Omitting all reference to matters of dispute, I shall now give a brief sketch of what is generally agreed to be the correct history of the three years comprising our Lord's public life.

After His Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation, we find Him on the banks of the Jordan, and thence returning with five disciples to Galilee, where He works His first miracle at Cana. This occurred in the spring, probably of the year A.D. 27*. At His first recorded visit to Jerusalem at the Passover, in April, His bold act of purging the temple, and other miracles not specified, attract the attention of many, including Nicodemus, one of the Sanhedrim. The next eight months are spent in Judea, but of them we have no account, beyond the significant notice that the new Teacher had gathered more disciples than John Baptist by the end of the year. Up to this point we have only St. John's narrative, but the Four Gospels all relate that on the Baptist's imprisonment by Herod Antipas, probably in December,† Christ departed into Galilee, journeying, as

* See Archbp. Thomson's Art. *Jesus Christ*, in Smith's *Bibl. Dict.*, and Ellicott, *Hulsean Lect.*, p. 104 (note).

† Our Lord's notice, while on the journey, that there were yet four months to harvest (John iv. 35), *i. e.* to April, fixes this date.

John tells us, through Samaria. And now commences that wonderful series of miracles and instructions of which we have a fuller account than of any other part of the history, all but exclusively in the first three Gospels. Our Lord first preaches at His own city, Nazareth, but the men who had known Him for so long as the humble but spotless mechanic, reject His ministry and attempt His life. He then fixes His abode at Capernaum, and from that town as a centre makes, at intervals, lengthened circuits of the whole of Galilee. This work continues for sixteen months,* only once interrupted by the occurrence of the second Passover, which Jesus attends at Jerusalem, and at which the hostility of the Pharisees and Rulers is first openly manifested, being directed against His alleged Sabbath-breaking. On account of their ill-concealed designs against Him, He does not go up to the third Passover; but the two miracles of feeding the multitude, just at that period, April, A.D. 29, bring to a crisis the excitement of the people concerning Him, and His sudden retirement alone prevents their making Him king by main force. His refusal of their homage, and the crucial test He imposes in the mysterious declarations recorded in John vi., seem to cause a strong reaction, for after a solemn denunciation of the cities of Galilee for their impenitence and unbelief, He withdraws from their neighbourhood, and appears to spend the next six months in more extended tours in the extreme north of Palestine, visiting Phœnicia, the semi-barbarous districts of Decapolis, and the mountainous vicinity of Cæsarea Philippi, where the transfiguration and the first intimation of His coming sufferings to the Apostles occur in significant proximity at a week's interval. We find him once again at Capernaum, and then, in October, He finally leaves Galilee, and "stedfastly sets His face to go to Jerusalem." There He appears at the Feast of Tabernacles in October, after which He spends the remaining six months of His life in the southern part of the country,† chiefly in Peræa beyond Jordan, and to this period

* This has been much disputed. The whole question rests upon whether the "feast of the Jews," named in John v., 1, was a Passover or not. Ellicott (Huls. Lect., p. 135) maintains that it was the Feast of Purim, and works out this theory, which gives only three weeks for the whole "Central Galilean" ministry, with great force and beauty. But the arguments in favour of the feast being our Lord's second Passover seem decisive: see Robinson, *Harmony*, p. 199 (Tract Society); Archbp. Thomson's Art: *Jesus Christ*, in Smith's *Bibl. Dict.*; and Trench, *Miracles*, p. 243.

† The final departure from Galilee named by Luke (ix. 51), can certainly be identified with the journey of John vii. From the Feast of Tabernacles to the Passover six months would elapse, to which period belong all the events narrated in Luke x.—xviii. See Ellicott, *Huls. Lect.*, Lect. vi.

belongs the mission of the seventy, who precede Him in His tours. Our knowledge of this half-year is very slight, and the order of events doubtful. They are only recorded by St. Luke, with one or two important exceptions. St. John names a visit to Jerusalem at the feast of the dedication in December, and the visit to Bethany to raise Lazarus from the dead, which miracle determines the Rulers to put Jesus to death at all costs. For a short time, however, He remains in the village of Ephraim, safe from their hostile designs; until, five days before the Passover, He enters the city in triumph, to the amazement of His enemies, who exclaim, "Behold the world is gone after him." Disappointed, however, in the hope that He would now set up His Messianic kingdom in their midst, the fickle populace desert Him, and when, on the night of their solemn feast, He is arrested and arraigned before the governor, the voices which had so lately shouted "Hosanna" overcome the vacillation of Pilate by their maddened cry, "Crucify him! crucify him!"

But if it is interesting to realize the life of Christ in its historical aspects, how much more to study its moral features! The examination of the Gospels with a view to estimating, as far as we may, the personal character and the distinctive teaching of Jesus, His use of miraculous power, and many other aspects of His earthly life, will be found to reward in the highest degree the time and thought bestowed upon it. We will rapidly glance at some of these departments of Scripture study.*

And, first, regard the *human character* of our Lord. We feel instinctively, in reading the Gospels, that they present to us an unapproachable excellence. And this very perfection has been alleged as a ground for doubting its reality, and referring it to an ideal portraiture. I do not systematically refute this theory, but the reader will observe the bearing upon it of the considerations I submit on the general subject.

(1.) Observe the *novelty* of Christ's character. Not only is it unapproachable, but altogether unlike all previous ideals of human excellence. Take the various pattern men of the Old Testament—Elijah, for instance, the austere type of humanity; or David, the heroic type; or Moses, the type of consecration to duty; or Joseph, the type of purity and gentleness; and compare these, noble as they are, with Jesus of Nazareth. Take the two ideals of the ancient

* Many of the thoughts in the remaining portions of this paper are derived from Bishop Sumner's *Ministerial Character of Christ*, Bushnell's *Character of Jesus*, and from a course of lectures on *The Life and Teaching of Christ*, delivered to the Divinity students of the King's College Evening Classes, by Professor Plumptre.

world;—on the one hand the fearless, generous, yet vindictive, warrior Epaminondas or Coriolanus, and, on the other hand, the tranquil philosopher, the Socrates or Seneca, sublimely indifferent to his own *or others'* misfortunes; and how entirely apart from them all is the character of the Man Christ Jesus! Perhaps the highest human ideal of virtue was that of the Stoics, whose system produced some of the noblest characters of antiquity, a Scipio and a Marcus Aurelius; yet how do we shrink from its calm, unimpassioned severity, when we see the Saviour's human soul, while none the less pure and patient, so delicately sensitive to the sorrows, the joys, the sympathies of life.

(2). Observe the *uniqueness* of Christ's character. It is most remarkable how it embodies features which, in that of any other man, would be irremediable flaws. We associate weakness with innocence; a harmless, guileless man is, both in theory and fact, one destitute of manly spirit; but Jesus, though "meek and lowly in heart," impresses all who behold Him with a sense of majesty. Nothing is more repulsive in a man than the assumption of a dignity unbefitting his external circumstances; but Jesus, the Galilean carpenter, assumes the very highest supremacy without exciting in us any other feeling than reverence. What more irresistible argument that Christ is God than that He was able to say, without in the least offending us, "Ye are from beneath, I am from above;" "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me"? And how can we reconcile with the humility of virtue the professed design of regenerating the earth and restoring the harmonious relations of the creature and the Creator, unless the poor Nazarene Teacher who avowed it were indeed Divine? Again, we all know that increased familiarity with a friend reveals many little blemishes in his character before unobserved; but with Jesus it is just the reverse, as a careful study of the Gospels will show. But—greatest contrast of all—whereas the very essence and foundation of human piety is repentance, and without confession of guilt virtue becomes self-righteousness, Jesus, acknowledging no sin, because having none to acknowledge, exhibits what to our distorted vision seems a complete anomaly.

(3). Observe the *harmony* of Christ's character. Qualities which, in ordinary men, would be most incongruous, in Him are blended in perfect concord. We always run to extremes, even till our virtues become blemishes. How different is Jesus! He evinces an intense abhorrence of sin, yet overflows with love to sinners. He is never known to laugh, yet, so far from being unhappy, He "rejoices in spirit." His pure nature is ever communing with the world of spirits; yet He is no ascetic, but mingles with, and sym-

pathises with, His friends in the house of mourning or the house of feasting. None were ever so devoted to a great work, yet opposition and seeming failure produce no chagrin. He magnifies the law, yet is the great reformer of the day. He leaves a bright example in the two opposite phases of the Christian life, viz., devout solitude and active beneficence, passing His nights in prayer and His days in deeds of love.

Now conceive four Jews, three of them uneducated, inventing such a character, and agreeing in their account of it! Rather would we exclaim in contemplation of its unity and loveliness, "By *this* we believe that thou camest forth from God!"

Yet more profitable is it to study the character of Jesus as the guage and the example of our own lives. Who can contemplate the modest retirement of His youthful days, the self-abnegation of His life, the wisdom, and forbearance, and tender love that mark every act and every word, the devotion to the Father's will in the accomplishment of His holy mission which, like a golden thread, runs through all the history, without feeling more deeply his own unworthiness, without receiving a new impulse to his highest aspirations?

Regard, next, the peculiarities of our Lord's *teaching*. This, again, is a great subject; and I can only indicate a few of the paths which lie open to the enquiries of the student.

1.—Observe the *novelty* of Christ's teaching. The great questions of the day were either speculative, as—"Which is the great Commandment?" "What is the condition of the twice-married in heaven?" or else legal, as—"What constitutes Sabbath-breaking or ceremonial uncleanness?" But Jesus rises far above all such subtleties, sweeps away the traditions that make void the law, declares its spirituality and breadth, supplies (as Bishop Sumner says)* "a new touchstone for the trial of human conduct," and all this—not in moral disquisitions, like the Scribes; not in mystic doctrines of the True and the Beautiful, like the Greeks of that age and the Germans of our own—but in simple authoritative precepts, insomuch that the people "were astonished at His doctrine," and officials exclaimed, "Never man spake like this man." And up to His day knowledge was avowedly reserved to the rich and learned, whom we find contemptuously alluding to the lower orders as "this people which knoweth not the law;" but so marked is the novelty of Christ's teaching in this respect that He himself associates it with His miracles, "The lame walk, the deaf hear, the blind see, the dead are raised, *and the poor have the Gospel preached to them.*"

* Ministerial Character of Christ, p. 255.

2.—Observe the *adaptation* of Christ's teaching to the hearers, and its power on the conscience. He preaches repentance and duty to God and man throughout Galilee, but they spurn His words of love. Then (for it was not till half the period of His ministry had elapsed*) He ceases, by open instruction, to give them food for their blasphemy, and confines Himself to parables, which would reward the earnest enquirer after truth, while repelling the careless and the scornful†. He refutes the error of the Sadducees (Matt. xii.) from that part of Scripture which they hold in peculiar honour —the Pentateuch. He elicits from the Pharisees (Matt. xxi.) an indignant condemnation of the "wicked husbandmen," and then, by quoting one verse of a Psalm, throws it back upon themselves. He meets the curiosity of Nicodemus (John iii.) with the hard doctrine of necessary regeneration, and while not hiding from him God's saving love, rebukes the secrecy of his visit by a passing allusion to men that "love darkness rather than light." To the poor woman of Samaria (John iv.) from whom Nicodemus would have shrunk as from an outcast and a profligate, He reveals Himself in clearer terms than to any one else on earth, and while exposing her sin, tells her of salvation.

3.—Observe the significance of our Lord's *Scripture Quotations*. Whatever part of the Old Testament He quotes He draws from it a meaning but partially, if at all, recognised by the Jewish divines teaching us what deep spiritual truth may underlie many passages to which we attach no such importance. Thus, from the histories of Elijah and Elisha, He illustrates, in the synagogue at Nazareth, the sovereignty of God, and the calling of the Gentiles (Luke iv.). By the simple incident of David eating the sacred bread, He enforces the subordination of scrupulous discipline to high and universal principles (Matt. xii.). Who would have seen other than a local significance in the three texts from Deuteronomy with which He repels the tempter (Matt. iv.)? Our Lord's references to the Old Testament are continual throughout His ministry,‡ and even in the

* The first recorded parable appears to have been delivered during our Lord's second circuit of Galilee (Luke viii. 1—4) in the second year of His ministry, and if, as is probable, it was suggested by the actual sight of the operation of sowing, the time would probably be December.

† While, on the one hand, the main object of parabolic teaching is obviously to simplify truth, we cannot doubt, in the face of Matt. xiii. 10—16, that it was partly intended to supersede that direct preaching of repentance and of the spirituality of the law which had been received with so much opposition, and that thus our Lord ceased to "cast pearls before swine." On the general subject see Trench, *On the Parables*, introductory chapters.

‡ The direct references are at least eighty in number; the indirect probably as many more.

midst of His dying agony, His cry of desolation, and the words with which He resigns His spirit, are quotations from the Psalms.* Surely there is a lesson for us here. If the Old Testament—even (as some now boldly speak) those "plainly inaccurate" books, Genesis, Daniel, Jonah—even that supernatural element which "melts away," as we are told, before modern discernment—received such honour from our Divine Master, how can we regard it with any other feelings than those of the deepest reverence?

4.—Observe the *gradual development* of Christ's teaching. This is a most interesting subject. A careful examination of the Gospels reveals Jesus first preaching repentance, then going on to elucidate the law, and expose the fallacies of the scribes, then affording glimpses into the higher truths concerning His person and work. This is especially noticeable in His private instruction of the disciples. Every new lesson is given them "as they are able to bear it." Not until the last year of His ministry does Jesus name His approaching sufferings. His fullest and clearest communication is made to them the very night before His death, and even then accompanied with the words, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." Not till after His resurrection does He enter into the great subject of redemption, and shew them the fulfilment in Him of the ancient prophecies. Nay, much is even then left till the Holy Ghost should "guide them into all truth."

5.—Observe the *uniqueness* of Christ's teaching. I will illustrate this by a similitude, borrowed from Dr. Goulburn†. Light is pure and colourless, but if we analyse it by dividing the rays through a prism, we perceive that, so far from being destitute of colour, it unites all colours. Now in the writings of Paul, Peter, James, and John, Truth is reflected through the media of their individual minds, and each exhibits one aspect of it more prominently than the others; each, as it were, reflects one ray: the violet, or the indigo, or the red. For example, Paul lays especial stress on faith, James on works, John on the religion of the heart, Peter on that of the life. But Christ is the Truth itself, and His words, combining all its aspects, are like the pure light uniting the rays of every hue. We trace in them no particular complexion, yet in them are wrapped up all those blessed truths which our finite minds could nevertheless no more comprehend, unless severally reflected in the Epistles, than our eyes can perceive colour in the transparent light.

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* Compare Matt. xxvii. 46, and Luke xxiii. 46, with Psalm xxii. 1, xxxi 5.

† *Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*, ch. 1.

If the words of Christ present a wide field of study, so also do His *deeds*, and especially His *Miracles*. *

We may (1) examine the internal evidence of the reality of each miracle. Or we may (2) observe their distinctive character, as not mere prodigies, but, as the Greek word generally used to designate them implies *signs*, *tokens* of the nature of the message they attested.† Even in those which at first sight seem mere displays of power, as the walking on the sea (which brought the Apostles help in time of need), or the cursing of the fig-tree (which impressed a solemn lesson without harming any one), we cannot fail to notice that Jesus, as one of our Church Collects expresses it, declared His "Almighty power most chiefly in shewing mercy and pity." Or (3) we may examine how far the miracles were intended to convince gainsayers, and how far reserved for those who exhibited some prior faith, which was certainly a frequent condition of their performance: —contrast such passages as, "Jesus, *seeing their faith*, said to the sick of the palsy, arise;"—"He could do no mighty works there because of their unbelief,"—with these and similar words, "Believe me for the very works' sake."‡ Or (4) we may study the miracles as acted parables, learning from them who alone can cure the leprosy

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* Archbp. Thomson (Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Jesus Christ*) thus classifies our Lord's miracles:—

I. **Miracles of Love** (1). Raising the dead—Three instances.
(2). Curing mental disease—Six instances.
(3). Healing bodily infirmities—Eighteen instances.

II. **Miracles of Power** (1). Creating—Two instances (the two cases of feeding the multitude).
(2). Destroying—One instance (the Fig-tree).
(3). Setting aside the ordinary laws of being—Seven instances (walking on the sea, stilling the tempest, changing water into wine, passing through the crowd, the two draughts of fishes, the coin in the fish's mouth).
(4). Overawing the opposing wills of men—Three instances (clearing the temple twice, causing the soldiers to fall backwards).

† Three Greek words are used in the Gospels, which are rendered in our version "miracles:" viz.:—*σημεῖα*, signs,—*δυνάμεις*, mighty works—*τέρατα*, wonders or prodigies. The first is by far the most frequent, the last least so. The three are named together in Acts ii. 22; 2 Cor. xii. 12; 2 Thess. ii. 9. In St. John's Gospel, the miracles are sometimes simply termed *ἔργα*, *works*. See *Trench, Miracles, Prel Essay*, chap. i.

‡ This is a very interesting and important subject. See Trench, *Miracles, Prel. Essay*, chap. iii. and vi.; Thomson, Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, Art. *Jesus Christ*; Chalmers, *Evidences of Christianity*, Book i.

of sin, strengthen the palsied will, give sight to the "inly blind." Or (5) we may trace in some of them a local purpose, as when we find many believing on Jesus in the very Peræan district, where the restored Gadarene demoniac had a year before, by Christ's special direction, published abroad "what great things God had done for him."* And should we meet with any doubter of the supernatural let us give utterance to our firm belief, in view of all we have seen of the uniqueness of Christ's life, that, as Dr Bushnell says, "Being a miracle Himself, it would be the greatest of all miracles if He did not work miracles."†

But our studies must penetrate even more deeply yet into the spirit and significance of this wonderful history, if we would discern the chief pervading element which takes the character, the teaching, the whole life of Jesus, so entirely out of the range of anything merely human. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son." *The life of Christ is a revelation from and of God.* The best men of the ancient world wearied themselves with searching for Deity, "feeling after him if haply they might find him," yet the result was that "the world by wisdom knew not God." And why? Because "no man hath ascended up to heaven save the Son of Man which is in heaven." "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, *He* hath declared Him." Our finite minds cannot comprehend the Infinite, but in the poor despised Nazarene Carpenter we see "the image of the invisible God." We mark His mighty works—then God is omnipotent; we mark His scrutiny of men's hearts—then God is omniscient; we mark His abhorrence of all sin—then God is the Holy One; we mark His tenderness—then God is love. True, Nature and Providence might, but for our blindness, teach us these attributes of the Creator. But there is something more, concerning which they utter not a word: we mark "the Agony and Bloody Sweat, the Cross and Passion, the precious Death and Burial, the glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and the Coming of the Holy Ghost," and then "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" is revealed "in the face of Jesus Christ," and we see "*God in Christ*, reconciling the world unto Himself."

In this paper I have treated the four Gospels as human compositions, and have scarcely alluded to their Divine element. Yet, on this very account, I am unwilling to close without a profession of my unhesitating belief that they were written under the all-pervas-

* Compare Mark v. 18—20, with John x. 40—42.

† *Character of Jesus*, p. 138.

ding influence of the Spirit of God.* If, as Mr. Garbett has ably argued†, the very words of Scripture be not inspired, what nearer do we get to the Divine truth Scripture contains by our minute critical investigations into the force of each tense and the significance of each particle? But, to adopt the words of Bishop Ellicott, "If we believe the Scriptures to be inspired of God, then it surely follows that we must never rest satisfied till we have elicited the fullest and most complete significance of every item of the heavenly Revelation thus mercifully vouchsafed to us. It becomes positive unfaithfulness not to dwell upon every clause, every word, every particle, if we have any real and heart-whole belief that what we are permitted to read are, indeed, as they were rightly termed by an Apostolic Father, 'The true sayings of the Holy Ghost‡.'"

This paper began by announcing as its object, "to incite to Bible study." But while we engage all our mental powers in the study of God's Word, let us approach it with this feeling ever uppermost,—that we are unthankful wandering children, reading the letter of a forgiving and forbearing Father. Let us admire it, treasure it, prove it, illustrate it, pore over it: but let us also accept, obey, and rejoice in its messages of grace. Let our studies of the life of Christ result in His receiving not only the homage of our intellect, the appreciation of our taste, the attachment of our moral sympathies, but the unreserved consecration of our heart and life, that He who once lived for us may live in us, and then, because He lives, "We shall live also," and that for evermore.

E. S.

* The union in the four Gospels of human variety and Divine perfection has perhaps never been more clearly explained than in the illustration of *four clerks*,—first suggested, I believe, by Archbishop Usher. I direct four clerks severally to write an account of a certain circumstance. The composition of each will differ, in many respects, from those of the other three, and will be tinged with the peculiar mental characteristics of the writer. If I had directed that each account should be written for some particular person, or with some particular object, this would further affect the character of each composition. When all are finished, I go carefully over them, word by word,—not to render them uniform, that would defeat my own object—but to ensure their entire freedom from error. Do I not thus make myself fully responsible for every word of all four, although the stamp of individuality remains upon each? Now where is the essential difference between this subsequent revisal and the accompanying inspiration we claim for the Gospels? The one, indeed, we can comprehend, the other we can but dimly apprehend, because it is the secret operation of the Divine Spirit; but the illustration assuredly affords a just, though indeed an inadequate, conception of the matter. As Dr. Chalmers says, in one of his lectures on Butler's *Analogy*, Cannot God effect the supernatural without violence or derangement to the harmonies of the natural?

† At a recent clerical meeting at Islington.

‡ *Aids to Faith*, Essay on *Scripture and Its Interpretation*, p. 435.

THE MEANS OF GRACE.

As my former paper upon "the Baptismal Covenant and Vow" proved acceptable to the readers of the "Quarterly," I am induced to offer some general thoughts upon the remaining portion of the Catechism in order to make the two papers in some measure complete in themselves. The explanation given in our Catechism with respect to the Baptismal Covenant and Vow ends with a brief and beautiful summary of the laws of the two tables. The remaining part of the Catechism speaks of Prayer and the Sacraments. There are, as it seems, three "Means of Grace;" Prayer, the Sacraments, and the reading or preaching of God's Word. The last of these is omitted in the Catechism, although the doctrines taught therein must necessarily lead us to the source whence they come; we shall therefore not speak of it particularly here, nevertheless we should be wrong if we omitted to place it on an equal footing of importance with the Sacraments and Prayer.

The link which joins the vow of obedience with the subject of prayer is found in the question immediately preceding the Lord's prayer. This link is a very important one. We must learn our own weakness before we can be taught to pray. Prayer holds a very prominent place in the religion of every true Christian, in fact it is one of the surest tests of the reality of that religion. "By faith" Moses is said to have "endured, as seeing Him who is invisible" (Heb. xi. 27). He who has faith, then, lives as in God's sight, and so lives a life of prayer, for no one can feel God's continual presence without having a prayerful spirit. And it is equally true that he who does not live a life of prayer is not a faithful disciple of Christ.

Wherein then does the strength and value of prayer consist? What is the efficacy of prayer? God's providence ordains all things, the future is all planned out by Him, and therefore cannot be changed; is not prayer then useless? Again, God in His love gives us all that is best for us, and if so is not prayer needless? These are arguments which we cannot answer. We are dealing with a mystery which is too deep for us; let us acknowledge that it is a mystery, else we shall be led to rest merely upon what is called the subjective efficacy of prayer, and make out that God ordained it to benefit our hearts alone, without seeing any higher power in it. We should thus lose much of its value. The only explanation of this mystery must be found in the intercession of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Spirit in our heart guides our request (although at the same time in some mysterious manner

leaving us perfectly free) so as to harmonize it with the intercession of Christ, and it must be remembered that our prayer is granted only when it does so harmonize with His intercession. If any man were to ask us why we prayed, we should reply that prayer was the instinctive echo of the feelings of every human heart, and that it was moreover distinctly enjoined by Scripture (Matt. vi. 9—13; John xvi. 23, 24; xvii.).

We may say, then that what is best for us is brought about by virtue of our prayer. The next question to be considered is, How can we teach our children to pray? This question it is easier to ask than to answer. There seems to be no direct way to this very important object. We can bring the subject of prayer constantly before their minds, we can encourage them in the duty, we can pray for them ourselves and ask Him to whom all hearts are known to pour His Holy Spirit into their souls, so that the seed which we have sown may bring forth good fruit; we must leave the work to be completed by His Almighty power.

Lastly, we have to learn how to pray. The Catechism teaches us this by giving us the Lord's Prayer as a model by which we are to test our other prayers. It is hardly necessary to explain it in detail here; but, as we pass by it, let us learn what are the chief lessons which it teaches us on the subject of prayer itself. It teaches us (1) to pray for others as well as for ourselves, "give *us* this day:" (2) to pray for temporal blessings, "our daily bread" (comp. John xvii.): and (3) to realize the presence of Him to whom we address our petition, "Our Father, which art *in heaven*." Oh, that we could teach to the hearts of our children the mighty power of prayer! It is one thing to read and to speak and to learn about it; it is, we all must feel, another thing to pray as Christians ought to pray.

We come now to the Sacraments. This part of the Catechism was inserted in the year 1604, at a time of great controversy in the church, and it will be noticed that the expressions which it contains are very carefully worded. A sacrament according to the definition laid down by our church must (1) have an outward sign, (2) an inward grace, and (3) have been ordained by Christ himself. Baptism and the Lord's Supper can alone by this definition be called sacraments. We have shewn the mysterious nature of prayer, we now proceed to point out the mystery of the sacraments. We cannot conceive of the union of an outward sign with a spiritual grace. Many have tried to explain away this mystery in the Lord's Supper, and to bring it within the range of our finite understanding. As might be expected, they have fallen into errors, either by denying the spiritual grace altogether, or on the other hand by resting on the doctrine of transubstantiation. To one of these extremes any attempt at explaining the mystery must

ultimately lead. If we turn to our Bible (John vi.; 1 Cor. x. 16, 17; 23—29) we shall find that both these parts of the sacrament are distinctively brought forward, but that the union of the two is nowhere explained, and this because the subject is too high, too incomprehensible for us.

I shall not touch upon the rest of the Catechism, for it seems to explain itself, and must leave each teacher to bring the thoughts which I have offered to bear upon the peculiar wants of his or her own class. I do not agree with those who hesitate in their teaching to acknowledge mysteries in God's dealings with man, especially in our senior classes where the more evident truths of God's word have become familiar, and these higher thoughts must sooner or later rise up in the minds of those whom we teach, when, if not clearly pointed out and explained beforehand they lead too often to dissent or even to neglect of God's worship altogether.

THE JEWISH CAPTIVITY.

Although we have so many reliable authorities—both sacred and profane—of the time of the Jewish captivity, yet it is a period of which very few Bible readers have any accurate or satisfactory knowledge. This is, probably owing (i.) to there being no regular consecutive history of it in the Bible, it being gathered from Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, &c.; (ii.) to the different dates assigned by different chronologists to the same events; (iii.) to the difficulty in identifying the monarchs of the Bible with the kings of profane history,—as Darius the Mede, with Cyaxeres. The inspired authors often only give their *title*, as *Pharoah*; the first instance of which is in the time of the shepherd kings:—"The princes of *Pharoah* saw her, and commended her before *Pharoah*, and the woman was taken into *Pharoah's* house." (Gen. xii. 15.)* The *Pharoah* who made slaves of the Hebrews was, probably, *Rameses Miamum*, and the one who was drowned in the Red Sea, *Amenophis*. We have, however, the name of the king added in 2 Kings xxiii. 29, and in Jeremiah xliv. 30,—Pharoah-*Necho* and Pharoah-*Hophra*. Ahasuerus is only a title—Achash-Zwerosh, or the mighty ruler—which accounts for it being applied to so many kings in the Bible (Ezra iv. 6, 7; Esther i. 1, 2; Dan. ix. 1); *e. g.*—"In the first year of Darius, the son of *Ahasuerus*, of the seed of the Medes," &c.;—in profane history, Cyaxeres, the son of *Astyages*. In the New Testa-

* Will the reader be kind enough to refer to *all* the texts quoted in this paper?

ment, also, the Roman emperors are always called Cæsar (Matt. xxii. 17; John xix. 12; Acts xvii. 7; Phil. iv. 22); except in Luke ii. 1, "There went out a decree from Cæsar *Augustus* that all the world should be taxed" (or enrolled).

It is the object of the present article to give such a plain and simple account of events, without adding anything new or clever, as shall interest all Bible readers, and leave them with a clearer idea of the identity of the kings, and of the sequence of events.

I.—Before the Captivity.

Although the Jews were specially chosen by God for His people, and were the only nation to whom He so plainly revealed Himself, yet the very king who built the Temple for His service and worship fell into idolatry; and on the death of Solomon more than half the nation, under the guidance of the usurper whom they had chosen, openly set up idols in the land, till they utterly forsook the worship of the true God, for which they were led into captivity by Shalmaneser (2 Kings xvii. 3—7), 721 B.C., after the kingdom of *Israel* had been founded only 254 years. "For they served idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them, 'Ye shall not do this thing,' therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of His sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only" (2 Kings xvii. 12, 18.) Thus the prophecy of Amos was fulfilled, "For thus Amos saith, 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land.'" (Amos vii. 11).

The children of Judah, though never so bad as Israel, were yet constantly falling into the sin of idolatry: their unfaithfulness to God being likened to that sin which is held in the greatest abhorrence by all civilised nations. (Ezekiel vi. 9; Jer. iii. 1—20; Hosea i. 2—4; Deut. xxxi. 16.) Jehoram was a sad instance of idolatry, for having married the daughter of Ahab, he followed in all his wicked ways. Amaziah, who served God at first, and was much blessed by him, was afterwards so foolish as to worship the gods of the very nation which he had conquered. Manasseh reared altars to Baal, made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven.

It is seen, therefore, that the kings of Judah were constantly falling into idolatry, notwithstanding the bright examples of Asa, Josiah, Jehosaphat, and Hezekiah; and the constant warnings and threatening predictions of the prophets — Isaiah, Hosea, Micah, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk; as God truly said unto them, "I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, 'Oh! do not this abominable thing that I hate'" (Jer. xliv. 4).

As a warning to them, the captivity was plainly predicted in Isaiah

xxxix. 6, 7. The king and people of Judah at length tempted the anger of God so far with their foolish and sinful idolatries that, in the reign of Jehoiakim, He fulfilled the prophecies of evil by bringing Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem, who in 607 B.C. put Jehoiakim in chains, but afterwards released him; he, however, carried Daniel and his three companions to Babylon, as prophesied by Isaiah above.

Nebuchadnezzar allowed Jerusalem to have its own kings till 588 B.C., and it was in this interval that Jeremiah was put in the pit in the dungeon, and drawn out of the mire by the kind Ethiopian eunuch, 589 B.C. (Jeremiah xxxvii., xxxviii.)

588 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem after a long siege, put out Zedekiah's eyes, and carried him to Babylon, according to the seemingly contradictory prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel (Jer. xxxii. 4; Ezekiel xii. 13). The wonderful fulfilment of these prophecies is noticed by Josephus: "These things happened to Zedekiah, as Jeremiah and Ezekiel had foretold to him (Antiquities x. vii. 2), that he should be caught, and brought before the king of Babylon, and should speak to him face to face, and should see his eyes with his own eyes, and thus far did Jeremiah prophecy. But he was also made blind, and brought to Babylon, but did not see it, according to the prediction of Ezekiel." (Antiquities x. viii. 2.)

The kingdom of Judah was destroyed 508 years after Saul became its king; and 133 years after the carrying away of the ten tribes by Shalmanesar.

II.—The Captivity.

The city where "the man after God's own heart" lived, wrote his psalms, and died, is now desolate and deserted. The beautiful and magnificent Temple, which the wisest of men built to the honour and glory of the great Jehovah, is now in ruins. The golden candlestick and vessels made for God's service, are now in the heathen temple of the idol Belus. The land which was specially promised and given to God's own people, is now in the possession of idolatrous strangers. The poor Jews, who, from their peculiar rites, differ from all other nations, are now captives in a foreign and heathen land. The children of Judah, whose sin of idolatry is punished with captivity, are now in a land where they are persecuted for *not* worshipping idols. They who were taught to believe in, and to obey God, are now where the tower of Babel stands a lasting warning to all disobedience and unbelief.

Who does not feel the touching and pathetic beauty of the mournful psalm in which the sorrowing Jews gave vent to their grief? Ps. cxxxvii., i.—"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea,

we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, 'sing us one of the songs of Zion.' 'How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?'"

During the captivity, the Jews received the prophecies of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Obadiah and Habakkuk, and to support them in their grief and sorrow, they had these plain cheering prophecies—"Thus saith the Lord, that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place" (Jer. xxix. 10). "I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them: and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens and eat the fruit of them" (Amos ix. 14).

Let us look now at the land to which the sinning and sorrowing Jews have been carried. Babylon was one of the most splendid cities that has ever existed: it was built on a large plain, in an exact square, fifteen miles each way, or sixty miles in circumference: it was surrounded by immense cyclopean walls, defended by two hundred and fifty or three hundred towers, and by a deep ditch well filled with water. The city was entered by one hundred fine gates of solid brass, twenty-five on each side, from which the broad streets ran in direct lines to the gates opposite, crossing each other at right angles. The large squares thus formed were occupied by houses, with fields and gardens intervening; while through the middle of the immense city flowed the Euphrates, on the banks of which the daughters of Judah sat down and wept; a magnificent bridge joined the two parts of the city.

At the *east* end of the bridge stood the old palace, which occupied four squares, being four miles in circumference: while at the *west* end stood the new palace, about seven miles in circumference, with a passage under the river connecting the two. Near the new palace were the stupendous hanging gardens undertaken by Nebuchadnezzar to imitate his queen Amyte's native Median hills, which were begun and finished during the captivity.

Although there was so much to attract and amaze in this fine city, yet how shocked and disgusted must the pious Jew have been, when he saw the magnificent temple of Belus towering in huge proportions above the city, and having its statues and vessels made of massive gold!

Babylon was probably founded by *Nimrod* (Gen. x. 8—10), who was afterwards deified as Bel or Belus, and had a temple built to

his honour, on the site of the tower of Babel, from which Babylon takes its name.

Several Assyrian monarchs ruled at Babylon after Nimrod (amongst whom was the clever, but grossly wicked queen Semiramis), till the time of the licentious and voluptuous Sardanapalus, when an insurrection broke out, and the king, fearing the result, burnt himself in his palace. The Assyrian empire was then divided into —1. Babylon; 2. Nineveh; 3. Media. Among the kings of the new *Babylonian* empire, we meet with—*Merodach Baladan* (the son of the founder), who sent to congratulate Hezekiah on his recovery (2 Kings xx. 12, 13, B.C., 712). Among the Assyrian kings who had *Nineveh* for their capital were—Ninus the younger, or *Tiglath-Pileser*, who assisted Ahaz when besieged by the kings of Israel and Syria (2 Kings xvi. 7—9, B.C. 740);—*Shalmanesar*,* who carried away captive the ten tribes (2 Kings xvii. 3—6, B.C. 723—721);—and his son *Sennacherib* or Sargon, whose general, Rabshakeh, sent the blasphemous letter to Hezekiah, and who was killed by his sons (Isaiah xxxvii. 8—13, B.C. 710)—"and *Esarhaddon* his son reigned in his stead," who took Babylon and re-united it with Nineveh;—*Nabuchon*, whose general, Holofernes, was killed by Judith;—and, 606 B.C., the celebrated *Nebuchadnezzar* succeeded his father, having been previously associated with him in the government.

When Nebuchadnezzar took away the four princely youths of the royal house of Judah at his first siege of Jerusalem, 607 B.C., he brought them up in his palace with other young nobles, and had them taught in all the learning of the Chaldees, having given them new names after his idols, Bel and Sheshach, as Belteshazzar and Shadrach.† (Daniel i. 3—16). These four noble youths refused to defile themselves with meats offered to idols, thus showing, while yet young, their love for the God of Abraham their father and their determination to do what was right in His sight.

605 B.C. At this time Nebuchadnezzar's father died, and in the second year of his sole reign (603 B.C.) he had the dream of the four great monarchies and the kingdom of Christ. Zedekiah, king of Judah, having revolted, Nebuchadnezzar's generals ravaged Judah for two years, and after the destruction of Jerusalem, all the people

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* Tiglath-Pil*eser*, Shalman*esar*, *Esar*haddon, Nebuchad*nezzar*, and Belte*shazzar*, are all various forms of Ashur or Assur mentioned in Gen. x. 22, and in Ezra iv. 2, "since the days of *Esar*haddon, king of *Assur*."

† Bel . . . . Belteshazzar.
Merodach . . Meshach.
Nebo . . . . Abednego.
Sheshach . . Shadrach.

were carried away captive, except the poor, who were left under the care of Gedaliah (2 Kings, xxv. 22—26), B.C. 588.

In the twentieth year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar set up a monstrous image, on the plains of Dura, made of the gold which he had amassed in his expeditions, when the three Hebrew youths again shewed their abhorrence of idolatry by refusing to fall down before this image, and when they were miraculously delivered from the fiery furnace. (It is supposed that Daniel was away on affairs of state at this time.)

578 B.C. Two years after this event, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre, and took it after thirteen years (Isaiah xxiii.), returning with rich spoils to Babylon, where his astonishing structures were almost finished.

God has openly shown his interference in the lives of some wicked men in a very wonderful and remarkable manner, both in profane biography as well as in some scriptural characters—as through the life of Ahab (1 Kings xvii. 1; xviii. 1—41; xx. 22, 35—43; xxi.; xxii. 15—23, 37, 38), and now in that of Nebuchadnezzar; favouring him with dreams, which foreshadowed future events. He now dreamt of the tree cut down, while the stump was left in the ground, which Daniel interpreted to him, as foretelling his own madness (Dan. iv. 19—27, B.C. 670.) At the end of twelve months, as in the pride of his heart he was shewing his new buildings and hanging gardens, Nebuchadnezzar was struck with a strange distemper, similar to lycanthropy, under which a person thinks himself some animal. Nebuchadnezzar fancied himself an ox, and imitated the manners of that animal, living upon grass for seven years, till "his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws" (Dan. iv, 33.)

On his restoration to sanity, Nebuchadnezzar praises, blesses, and honours the Most High: and who can say that the Nebuchadnezzar who is regarded as one of the wicked men of the earth, and who destroyed the Holy city, Jerusalem,—who can say that he may not be admitted to the "New Jerusalem,"—for the last that we read of him is, "I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgement; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." (Dan. iv. 37.)

561 B.C. After a reign of 44 years, Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by Evil-Merodach or Merodach the Fool; his wife was Nitocris, the daughter of Astyages, King of Media, who was one of the most prudent and active of her sex, directing the government during her husband's wicked and slothful reign. This King was murdered by his brother-in-law, Neriglissar, who, in his turn, was put to death by the king's son, *Belshazzar*, or Nabonedus.

538 B.C. At a festival sacred to the idol Sheshach, to show his contempt for the God of the captive Jews, Belshazzar had the holy vessels of the Temple brought "that the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines, might drink therein" (Dan v. 2). While their revelry was at its height, while the bright red wine sparkled in the golden vessels, while the rich choice viands and fruits were before them, and while their thoughts were wholly given up to sensuous pleasure, their wanton mirth and jollity were suddenly changed to terror and dismay, by God resenting their blasphemy, and causing a hand to write Belshazzar's doom upon the wall, in fiery characters,—*numbered, weighed, divided.*

In Belshazzar's despair, his mother, Nitocris, advises and calms him, while Daniel is sent for to interpret the writing. When Belshazzar sat down in mirth and sin to feast and revel, how little did he think that that very night would be his last upon earth! for while he was carousing, Babylon was taken by Cyrus, who had turned the Euphrates into a new channel, and had marched his army up the bed of the torrent into the heart of the city, according to the prophecy, "It shall come to pass, when *seventy* years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord for their iniquity," &c. (Jer. xxv. 12). Belshazzar reigned seventeen years.

538 B.C. Cyrus gave the government of Babylon to his uncle, *Cyaxeres, the son of Astyages*, called in Daniel xi., *Darius the son of Ahasuerus;* and Josephus confirms this by saying of Darius, "when he, with his kinsman Cyrus, had put an end to the dominions of the Babylonians, he was sixty-two years old. *He was the son of Astyages, and had another name among the Greeks.*" (Ant. x. xi. 4; Dan. v. 30, 31.)

In Darius' reign, Daniel again suffered persecution for his religion, being thrown into the lions' den, where God miraculously preserved his life. Josephus adds to, and rather illustrates, our Bible account of this transaction;—Daniel's enemies "said that the lions had been filled full with food, and on that account it was, as they supposed, that the lions would not touch Daniel, and this they alleged to the king; but the king gave orders that they should throw in a great deal of flesh to the lions, and when they had filled themselves, he gave further orders that Daniel's enemies should be cast into the den, that he might learn whether the lions, now they were full, would touch them or not; but the lions spared none of them, but tore them all to pieces, as if they had been very hungry and wanted food" (Ant. x., xi. 6).

Knowing by the prophecies of Jeremiah and Amos (Jer. xxix. 10; Amos ix. 14) that the captivity was now nearly at an end, Daniel

prayed earnestly at this time (B.C. 538) for the restoration of his people; when we have a most striking and encouraging illustration of the text, "While they are yet speaking I will hear" (Isaiah lxv. 24), for Daniel says, "While I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation" (Daniel ix. 2, 20—23).

Darius reigned only two years at Babylon, when Cyrus succeeded him, and gave the Jews leave to return to their own land, B.C. 536.

III.—The Return.

I have mentioned that one of the kingdoms, which rose on the decline of the first Assyrian monarchy, was that of Media. The second king from the founder was Cyaxeres, who, in conjunction with Nebuchadnezzar, made large conquests, and took Nineveh, B.C. 601.

595 B.C. He was succeeded by his son *Astyages*, the *Ahasuerus* of Daniel ix. 1, who was a cruel and luxurious prince. He had a daughter named Mandane, whom he gave in marriage to Cambyses the Persian; the result of this marriage was the birth of *Cyrus*. Astyages afterwards had a son, who succeeded him under the title of *Cyaxeres II.*, but called in Daniel *Darius the Mede*. Cyrus married his daughter (they being first cousins*); and on the death of her father, and his own, Cyrus inherited the two kingdoms, and thus united the "Medes and Persians," mentioned in Esther i. 19, B.C. 536.

God, through Isaiah, had said of Cyrus, "He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the Temple, thy foundation shall be laid" (Isaiah xliv. 28). "I have raised him in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways; he shall build my city, and shall let go my captives," (Isaiah xlv. 1, 13). In the very first year of his reign, either from having heard the above prophecies of himself, or else being specially moved by God's providence so to do, Cyrus allowed all the Jews to return to their dearly-loved country (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23).

Who cannot imagine the joy and ecstacy with which the captive Jews heard the proclamation of Cyrus, acknowledging that he was charged by God to free the captives to rebuild Jerusalem, and to

* Astyages or Ahashuerus the Mede

restore the Temple, which many of the old men could remember, as it stood in their youth, in all its glory? How great must have been the excitement of the Hebrews, and how their hearts must have beaten at the thought of returning to eat every man of his vine, and of his fig-tree, and to drink the waters of his own cistern!

"Whose heart hath not within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned,
From wandering on a foreign strand."

Scott.

Cyrus* not only restored the Jews to their land, but gave back to them 5400 holy vessels, which had been taken from the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar (read Ezra i., and v. 13—15); and both he and his people assisted them with presents of various kinds, to help the poor among them on their way, and also for the rebuilding of the Temple, B.C. 536.

The result of Cyrus' proclamation was, that 42,360 Jews, with 7,337 servants (Ezra ii. 64, 65), went up to Jerusalem, under the guidance of Zerubbabel, B.C. 536, seventy years after Daniel had been led captive to Babylon, and fifty-two years after the final destruction of Jerusalem. Sheshbazzar, mentioned in Ezra i. 8 and v. 16 is probably the Assyrian, and Zerubbabel the Hebrew, name of the same man, compare Zechariah iv. 9.

535 B.C. In the second year of the return, the foundations of the Temple were laid amidst shouts of joy, and noise of weeping (Ezra iii. 12, 13) The Jews were, however, much hindered in their rebuilding of the Temple by the jealousy of the Samaritans, whom Josephus calls Cutheans (Ant. xi., iv. 4), they being the idolatrous nations brought from Babylon and from Cuth, or Cuthah (See 2 Kings xvii. 24, 30).

The Jews having declined the offer of these Samaritans to help them in their work, was the beginning of that jealousy, which by the building of the rival temple on Mount Gerizim was strengthened into hatred, and was kept up till the time of our Saviour, when the Samaritan woman of Sychar asked Him with surprise, "How is it that thou, being a *Jew*, askest drink of me, which am a *woman of Samaria?* for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans" (John iv. 9; Luke ix. 52—53). This fact gives greater force to the parable of "The good Samaritan" (Luke x. 30—37).

529 B.C. After a reign at Babylon of seven years, Cyrus died, and was succeeded by his infamous son, *Cambyses*, called *Ahasuerus*, in Ezra iv. 6, to whom the Samaritans wrote an accusation against the Jews, which led to the building being stopped during his reign.

* I have chiefly followed Zenophon's account; Herodotus (i. c. 75, &c.) gives a more wonderful, but less pleasing account of Cyrus' birth and life.

After reigning like a madman for seven years, he died, leaving no son to succeed him.

522 B.C. The throne was usurped by *Smerdis the Magus*, whom Ezra calls *Artaxerxes* (Ezra iv. 7). The Samaritans also wrote to him, accusing the Jews of rebellion. Having searched the royal archives, Smerdis ordered the work to cease (Ezra iv. 23, 24). After a short reign of six months, he was strangled by Darius Hystaspes, who then mounted the throne, and who, fortunately, is also called by the same name in the fourth and fifth chapters of Ezra.

522 B.C. Darius Hystaspes is, probably, the Ahasuerus who married Esther, although some have argued very strongly in favour of this Ahasuerus being Artaxerxes Longimanus; Ahasuerus, it must be remembered, is merely the king's *title*. The argument is too long to go into here, as Hales, Prideaux, and others are in favour of Artaxerxes; but the chronology in the Bible margin places the events in the Book of Esther, in the reign of *Darius*. A strong argument in *his* favour is, that Mordecai was among the captives who were carried away with Jehoiachim to Babylon, B.C. 599 (Esther ii. 5, 6); so that in the time of Darius he must have been at least eighty years old. Artaxerxes did not come to the throne till B C. 464, when Mordecai would have been at least 140; when we consider how much he must have had to perform in the high post to which he was advanced, I think that my readers will agree that eighty was a more likely age than 140; and that *Darius is more likely than Artaxerxes to have been Esther's Ahasuerus*. If this be the right view, Vashti, who was divorced, was probably Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus.

Whether Darius was the husband of Esther, or not, after searching the decree of Cyrus, among the rolls at Ecbatana, he issued a decree that the Jews should be allowed to continue their buildings at Jerusalem; according to Josephus (Ant. xi. iii. 2—9; 3 Esdras iv. 40, 41) this decree was obtained by Zerobabel under rather peculiar circumstances.

515 B.C. The Jews were encouraged in their work by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, and after having been twenty years in hand, the Temple was completed; but well might the old Jews weep, when they compared the homeliness of the one built in the time of their poverty, with the magnificence of that erected by Solomon, in the height of power and riches. Where was now the Ark of the covenant—the symbol of the Divine presence—with the golden Mercy-seat? Could the Jews ever regain the Shechinah, when Jehovah's visible glory had once departed from them? Could the high-priests ever again be divinely directed by the Urim and Thummim, when they had once ceased to consult this oracle? Alas! poor Jews, none of these hallowed their second Temple.

Darius was a monarch of talent and ambition, and the first to

impose regular taxes upon his subjects; after a reign of thirty-six years, he was succeeded by his son, Xerxes, B.C. 485. This monarch has made his name well known by his foolish, ill-managed invasion of Greece. After the repulse which he there received, he returned to Susa, where he gave himself up to effeminate pleasures, and was murdered by his uncle, after an ignoble reign of twenty-two years B.C. 464.*

Owing to the apathy and covetousness of the Jews, many would not leave their new homes and occupations in Assyria, to return to and cultivate the land given them by God Himself; and owing to the annoyances and obstructions thrown in their way by their enemies, those who had returned became listless and disheartened, in repairing their capital.

464 B.C. When Artaxerxes Longimanus succeeded his father, Xerxes, he showed himself to be the Jews' true friend; for finding that the work at Jerusalem did not progress, in the seventh year of his reign, he sent Ezra to urge on the undertaking, giving him powerful credentials with full judicial powers; and a present of 100 talents of silver, 100 measures of wheat, and 800 gallons of wine and of oil (Ezra vii 11—26).

457 B.C. In this year Ezra (who is called *Esdras* in the Apocrypha and in Josephus) arrived at Jerusalem with 1775 persons, having been four months on the road. Ezra sets us all an example of earnestness, zeal, and piety, for at the present day we can read some of his prayers of confession, intercession, and thanksgiving, and on coming among the Jews he read the law of Moses to the people from a wooden pulpit "from the light until midday" (Neh. viii. 3); he collected together the inspired books, changing ancient names, and adding expressions, and explanations; he also set himself to reform the mixed marriages, and left a precedent for our missionaries to follow, when a convert has more than one wife; he induced 113 Jews to dismiss their strange wives.

445 B.C. In the twentieth year of his reign, king Artaxerxes (whom Josephus calls the husband of Esther, Ant. xi., vi. 1), was waited upon by a prince of the royal house of Judah, in the high and trusty office of cup-bearer. The king, seeing that the Hebrew prince looked sad amidst the gorgeous splendour around him, kindly enquired the cause, to which *Nehemiah* answered, "Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?" (Neh. ii. 3). Artaxerxes then, sympathising with his patriotic feelings, sent him to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls. On going round the walls of the city by night, Nehemiah found them still in ruins, notwithstanding all that had been done to push on

* Some Authors assign only twelve years to this monarch's reign.

the work, and such was the apathy of the Jews, that even Ezra, who had arrived twelve years before, had not yet got the walls repaired; but now Ezra and Nehemiah engaged together in the work of benefiting their countrymen. Nehemiah, having stirred up a right feeling in the people, engaged different parties to repair different parts of the wall; the builders being attacked by their enemies, he set guards and trumpeters to watch, and made all the labourers wear armour, and keep their weapons at hand. Finding that nothing could be done openly against Nehemiah, his enemies laid many traps for him, but he escaped them all by his strength of character, and by his upright, straightforward, and pious conduct; see chaps. iv. to vi. of Nehemiah.

Nehemiah set an example of generosity by resigning the salary given him by Artaxerexes, while he maintained 150 Jews at his table (Neh. v. 14—19). He strictly observed the Mosaic rites and ceremonies, the feasts of trumpets and tabernacles having never been more exactly kept since the days of Joshua; like Ezra he made all the Jews put away their heathen wives, and after twelve years of hard work in securing order, and the observance of Divine and human laws, he returned to Artaxerxes. On going back again to Jerusalem, Nehemiah found that many disorders had arisen, but with persevering firmness he checked them all, especially the bad observance of the Sabbath. It is much to be wished that the proper observance of Sunday were as vigorously enforced in London in the present day, as it was in Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah; as described in Neh. xiii. 15—22.

Manasseh, the High Priest, who had married the daughter of Sanballat, had given Tobiah a residence in the court of the Temple, which Nehemiah would not allow, and expelled Tobiah from his lodging, and Manasseh from the city. It was this which led Sanballat to apply for permission from Darius Nothus to build the rival temple on Mount Gerizim. Darius Nothus had succeeded his father Artaxerxes B.C. 425.

The city of David was now rebuilt and fortified, after having been in ruins about 144 years; and about 450 years afterwards, it was visited by the Son of David.

The sin for which the Jews were punished with captivity, was Idolatry, and of this sin they were thoroughly cleansed by their troubles; for although it is now 2,470 years since Nebuchadnezzar led Daniel and his companions captives to Babylon, the Jews have always had the utmost horror of all idols and images. May the time soon come when they will be still more enlightened, and when they will acknowledge their Messiah, and be again gathered to the land promised to Abraham and to his seed!

Camberwell. M. T. K.

SCRIPTURE PHILOLOGY.

No. X.—Our Lord's Idioms *(Continued)*.

Matt. iv. 23. "The *Gospel* of the kingdom."

It is worthy of notice that this description of the Good-news, Glad-tidings, or Gospel, as "the Gospel of the kingdom," is peculiar to our Lord Himself. *Afterwards* His Apostles called it by different names; as, "the Gospel of the grace of God," "the Gospel of God," and "of Christ;" but never "the Gospel of the kingdom."

It teaches us, we think, that by the preaching of our Lord, the kingdom was announced: by the Pentecostal effusion it was introduced: and may explain, too, why our Lord's description did not continue in use in the Church.

"The Kingdom."

The first we hear of an exalted kingdom "divers from all others," to be set up by God Himself, is in the Book of Daniel; from whence, and from the prophets in general, as the fountain head, added to our own personal religious experience under the Gospel, our conceptions of the ancient purposes, great transactions, and future intentions of its Divine Founder are derived. We should be fully awake to the *power* of prophecy in preparing the hearts of all believers, not excepting the Apostles, see Romans i. 2, and xvi, 26, for the mighty things which, "in His own times," God has done amongst us.

John Baptist told the people that "the kingdom of heaven was at hand," the Lord told them that "the kingdom" was "among them," and that it was "suffering violence," inasmuch as that "all men were pressing into it" prematurely, and before the gates were well open. The Pentecostal gifts flung wide these everlasting doors.

Now, we think this introductory description of the "glad tidings" as "the Gospel of the kingdom" will help us in the serious task we have undertaken in this paper,—namely, to answer the question—

What is the Gospel?

for surely, dear fellow-teachers, much—nay everything—belongs to our knowing what it is, both in regard to ourselves and our teaching. It is taken for granted that most religious teachers at this time are teachers of the Gospel; but indeed, in regard to the many, it is to be feared that we may be compared to Californian ore: in some specimens there is some five per cent. of the noble metal, in others ten, in others fifty, in others ninety, it may be; but the teaching of us all,

both small and great, ought to be gold in the nugget—nothing but pure gold—"the Gospel of the grace of God," as once delivered to the saints. Nor is there any valid reason why it should not be so; nor shall we have much success if it is not so. It is the Gospel which is the life-giving word, "and the power of God unto salvation," and which, like its Author, acts by its own energy; and the above comparison may help us a little further when we recall the quartzose admixture in most of the hand-specimens of this ore; for, brilliant though the masses be with pure prismatic rock crystal, yet even that is "crushed" by the ruthless, yet wise labourer, because it will enrich neither him nor others. He sacrifices everything to the gold.

Keeping in view the gradually revealed purpose of the great God to establish yet an eternal kingdom—after the failure of Adam's—over which One shall reign for ever, who is henceforth "King of kings, and Lord of lords;"—that its subjects are to be Adam's sons, and not Angelic beings;—that its locality is to be "a new heaven, and a new earth" when *this* is destroyed; and "He who made *this* out of nothing, can surely make *that*, now there is something to make it out of"—as Athenagoras sings—bearing this in mind, it may help us to say what the Gospel is: and first, since it is evident, now, that it is God's dear Son who is to reign over this kingdom for ever in the sight of his future subjects, and be for ever full of all human sympathies as he is at present, that Son must at some time or other assume the same nature which belongs to them; also, that since at the present time these subjects are "all gone out of the way, and become abominable, none doing good, no not one," it is equally clear that there must be some great things done both as it respects our Holy God, and us sinners; something so great as to reach to the thrones and dominions, and principalties, and powers, in heaven itself (see Col. i. 20)—so vast is the extent of redemption!—in order to reconciliation and propitiation; and in order to a return to dutiful obedience, before a sure foundation is provided for eternal love and allegiance, conferring such obligations as memory shall never forget, and affection never cool down upon through the endless "ages to come" (Eph. ii. 7). It follows that the carrying out in their detail these great things, is "*the Gospel.*"

Now, first, as to the *Person*, deeds, and words of Christ, when acting in his official capacity as "Saviour of the world;" (for some time, he was about his reputed father's business also;) we say that it is the Gospel to assert that it is *all the same as God*, being, doing, and saying them; that this is the "manifestation" of "God as our Saviour," (John i. 18): which accounts for all such words as these—"Whatsoever he seeth the Father do, these things doeth the Son

likewise"—"He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father:" and that this, as to the person of Christ, must be seen and taught in order to teach the Gospel. What Christ did for our relief, God did for our relief; and this, we say, must be taught in teaching the Gospel. How sweetly the truth that God is *ready* to save, comes out in words like these—"*I will*, be thou clean;" and again—"be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

Then, as to the *freeness* of the Gospel, there is a secret in preaching it in such a way as to make it tell upon the heart: a secret that mainly has respect to so opening the door, that any sinner may enter without further difficulty, who is wishing to do so. Teachers want to see, and make others see, with St. Paul, how "*where sin abounds, grace does much more abound*, (Rom. v. 20). So it comes to pass, that in gazing at this light, so bright that it dazzles, some good men have been led to put forth, as its reflection, unscriptural statements. For instance, we cannot say, with some, that it is the Gospel to teach that "all men are pardoned," either in respect of the first, or any other offence, by the Great Propitiation; for the voice of the uniform testimony of the Word is, that none are forgiven but those who "repent and believe."

Neither can we say it is the Gospel to affirm that the passion of the cross did not reconcile God to man, but was provided only to reconcile man to God. Doubtless it is the original and spontaneous love of God that provided the Lamb "before the foundation of the world," which, in the fulness of time, was slain for us. But then there are attributes and perfections in such an one as God, that need to be propitiated before man can be again raised above angels to be glorified for ever. The proclamation of His name and nature to Moses affirms this—"the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, . . who will by no means clear the guilty." Common sense, enlightened from above, teaches us it must be so; and the knowledge is confirmed by a thousand other Scriptures. The teaching of the word ought to be more closely studied on the topic of *reconciliation*. We seize the sound, rather than the sense of some of the several texts where it is mentioned, and we say, "see, it no where says that God was to be reconciled to man, but only man to God." But now, dear fellow-teachers, let us turn to Heb. ii. 17; "It behoved Him to be a merciful and faithful High Priest, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." What do these words teach but that God had to be reconciled? Besides, what is atonement?. The great atonement, or "sacrifice for sin," was not made and offered to man, but for man to God; and of course for the purpose of reconciliation.

It is but a shadowy objection to say that this statement (like some others, perhaps,) makes it out "that God was our enemy, and Christ our friend," for it embodies, also, the fact that the whole great scheme originated in the spontaneous love of God to man, and that its transactions in detail teem with that inscrutable depth of wisdom and commiseration which is "the love of God, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost that is given to us." When it is written, then, "that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," *it really means that God, who was the Creditor, became also the Debtor; He took upon Himself all the responsibility, and He cancelled the bond.*

There is one other error we need to guard against in teaching the Gospel, namely that we do not make faith (and it is true and living faith we always mean)—that we do not make faith *a condition* of salvation—a work on our part to be performed; for there is but one condition of salvation, namely, that One should "suffer, the just for the unjust," and bring us unto God. Or if we should prefer to say there are two, namely, one atonement, because "We have done what we ought not to have done," and "one obedience," because "We have left undone what we ought to have done"—why, both these the Apostle comprehends in the expressive phrase, "became obedient unto death;" and it is clear that one and both conditions were fulfilled by our most adorable substitute, the Mediator between God and man. *Faith is no condition, it is only the re-action of the heart in God.*

The sum, then, of the apostolic statement of the Gospel is this: that forasmuch as a propitiation has been made for sin, and "not for original sin only, but also for *all the actual sins of man*," (as our prayer-book so faithfully teaches,) *between God and man*—to speak of God for His part—there is now no displeasure to fear, no wrath to dread, no fiery terrors to alarm, for *God is in Christ.* But where, between man and God—to speak of man for his part—there is still alienation, and enmity and dread, the *sinner is out of Christ*, and "we beseech him in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God," or in other graphic words, to throw himself at once and confidingly, like the returning prodigal, on his father's love, assured that under *any* circumstance he shall hear no other "upbraiding" than this,—"bring forth the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet—for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." And this unconditional surrender, we say, is faith—faith of the best kind—faith that delivers us from the

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LUCTANCE.

Neither ... Is *sinful* ... as a man, being grievously wounded
the cross ... had been destroyed they could not, and if *Nineveh* ...
reconc... they would ... the prophet. In the last case, we
neou... they would ... the greatest of men. (*We are*
the ... travellers that "his ... is with them unto this day.
th... not mistake.)

... make his flight to Tarshish "from the presence of the Lord"
... war illustration by the flight of our debtors to *Boulogne*; for
... ed to get out of the realm. In the promised land God reigned
... the person of "the Presence," or Shechinah; and so the Holy
... land was the land of miracle and revelation, and immediate inter-
... ence in human affairs. Thus it is called, in 2 *Chron.* xiii. 5,
... the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of David." And hence the
... spontaneous fruitfulness of certain years; the *healing virtue* of
... certain in certain cases; the sacredness of the "two mules' burden
... earth" for Naaman's altar of sacrifice; and the many other
... tokens of special regard and sanctity.

Jewish enmity to Gentile favour seems to have been intense in
Jonah, and to be sufficient to explain the whole. "Pour out thine
indignation on the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the
kingdoms that have not called on thy name; for they have devoured
Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling place." "Blessed shall he be
that rewardeth thee, as thou hast served us." And truly, what

God was King of the country, in the way referred to, to invade that was to provoke and insult Him; so Jonah took up God's cudgels, s we might say. However, in God "mercy rejoiced over judg- ient;" not so in Jonah. "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye re of," seems to apply here.

Sins That are Past.

Rom. iii. 25- "The remission of *sins that are past* through the rbearance of God."

Why "sins that are past" only? Is there no "propitiation" r present sins? The Lord forbid but that there should be! es; it is written "if any man sin, He is the propitiation for our us"—and, therefore, *no* man need, or should be without peace of nscience. Sin will shake an enlightened man's soul to the centre; id take all the breath out of his body, if he comes to think he has ned once too often; and, it may be, has neither grace enough r light enough, to be able to drag his feet out of the "horrible t, out of the miry clay;" or his imagination becomes morbidly tive like poor John Bunyan's in his early days; as he describes in his autobiography. But if life is spared, there is time to cover; and if there is time to recover, there is grace to be had. The long-suffering of God leadeth thee to repentance." "It is od for a man to bear the yoke in his youth: he sitteth alone, and epeth silence because he hath borne it upon him."
"God hath an ear to hear," "If I've a heart to pray."
"Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy. ait, I say, on the Lord."

In regard to the above sentence—"sins that are past"—the sense this,—*God has exercised forbearance* in all past ages. He did so through the old dispensation especially—for "the blood of bulls d of goats" "could never take away sin." How could He then be ghteous, and forbear? The answer comes out *now:* "God hath t forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to clare His righteousness" in passing by transgression: "and His ercy too," a sinner may well add, who is healed. But shall we, ho know Christ, try His forbearance any further? "God rbid!"

G. N. S.

The Teacher in his School.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ADDRESS.

Sins of the Tongue.

"I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me."—Psalm xxxix. 1.

My Dear Children,

I want to talk to you to-day about a little thing that you all know something of, a little thing you all possess,—that little thing your own tongue. The Apostle St. James says of it, that though "a little member, it boasteth proud things," "that it is a fire, a world of iniquity," and further, that "the tongue can no *man* tame, it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." Now all this is sadly true, as our own past experience teaches us. You, each of you, know (as I know) what nasty unkind things it can say, when all the while it ought to be praising God for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us.

But before I talk about this unruly little member, I must ask you to travel with me, in thought, a long way back in the history of the world, and you will presently see my reason for this.

Three thousand years ago, in the land of Palestine, and at the small town of Bethlehem, a little boy was born. His brothers (and he had several) were fine handsome lads, but there was in him a quiet winning beauty that endeared him to all around him. He was well instructed in the law, and in the promised greatness of his own people, and, when old enough to work, was sent to tend his father's flocks on the mountains of that agreeable country. While sitting there day after day in his solitude, he trained his youthful mind to look up to the bright heavens overhead, to the golden harvests of grain in the distance, aye, and to the green sward on which he lay, and about which his flocks fed and wandered at their will, and in all these beauties of nature he saw the gifts of a loving Father; and then, in dependence upon that Father, his heart became embued with the holiest affections until, ere long, God's prophet, in speaking of him, declared that he was a "man after God's own heart."

But time rolls on, and the prophet receives a commission to go and anoint this promising youth to be the future king of the Lord's people. The prophet had never yet seen him, and when, in obedience to the command, he had found the father of the lad, and had invited him to a sacrifice, and had then sent for all his sons, the fine manly form of the eldest so favorably impressed him that he exclaimed, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him." But No, the Lord said, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth: for man looketh upon the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh upon the heart." 1 Sam. xvi. 7. And so they all passed in turn before the prophet, and the youngest, whose heart was right towards God, was chosen above his brethren, and anointed to be the future king of Israel.

(The children were asked to whom this description referred, and answered eagerly).

Years again rolled on, and troublous times arrived, but at length David was king, and as it always has been in the history of the world when man trusts to himself, so David sometimes griev-

ously sinned against that God who had done so much for him. Not that he ever entirely forgot Him, but whenever he began to trust in himself he was sure to sin, and God sent various punishments to remind him of his falling away. One of his heaviest trials, one which embittered the remainder of his days, was the undutiful and fearful rebellion of his handsome, but wicked son, Absalom. It was while an exile, seeing from the base designs of this wicked son, that he is supposed to have written the 39th Psalm. Now, my dear children, if a man who, on the whole, was so holy, so good, so much under the influence of God's Spirit, felt it necessary to offer up such a prayer, even that his mouth might be muzzled (for that is the meaning of the term), while those who had been his professed friends were hunting him to the death, how needful must such a prayer be for us, lest we be tempted to sin with our tongue!

I propose to day to speak of *four* of the sins of this little unruly member which are very common, and which Satan is constantly presenting to us to make us fall. First of all stands the "*angry* tongue." Now, we may be justly angry with sin, but, beyond this, anger becomes not a sinful worm. The Bible says, "He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly" (*i.e.*, acts wickedly), Prov. xiv. 17. Such was the case with Jonah who was angry with God—you will all remember how severely he was rebuked.

Children are often soon angry, and that for what trifles! The careless word followed by the hasty blow, and all the angry passions excited, a nuisance and hindrance to self and others. Who likes an angry person? I fancy you will tell me that you always avoid such a one. A popular writer says, "An irritable man is like a hedgehog rolled up the wrong way, and tormenting himself with its own prickles," a somewhat severe but tolerably correct picture. Think, too, what injustice such people do to one another. Let me give you two scenes on this subject by way of contrast:—Last evening a party were playing at cricket, when all at once the ball was thrown up, and struck the leader a fearful blow on the *shin*. "*Out, out*," cried several voices, thinking that the wicket had been struck. "No," replied he, "it did not hit the wicket." "But I heard it, Sir," said one. "No, my boy," was again the reply, "it struck my *shin*." "Oh, what a blow!" And a tremendous blow it was, as that *shin* could testify for many days after, but he was not angry with the boy who threw the ball, and who had no intention either of hurting or even of hitting any one. He would have been unjust both to himself and the boy had he been angry with that which was so purely an accident.

But just behind was another party, not over nice either in their manners or their language. All at once there was a disturbance, one had struck another with the ball. "Now you clumsy blockhead, can't you mind where you are throwing, you deserve to have it at your head." Other angry words followed, but to my great relief, no blows were struck. Now, I thought to myself, perhaps those may be two brothers—they will go home each one wrath with the other, will, perhaps, kneel by the same bed to-night, repeat the same prayer, the Lord's own Prayer, will hurry over the sentences, "Forgive us our trespasses, *as* we forgive them that trespass against us"—will jump into bed, "the sun going down upon their wrath," each unforgiven and unforgiving, and altogether unmindful of the Apostle's warning,—"Let all wrath, and anger, and clamour be put away from you with all malice." Eph. iv. 31. The Persians have a beautiful proverb, on the forgiveness of injuries, to the following effect: "That the sandal-tree when falling

under the heavy strokes of the woodman, pours forth its sweetest perfume upon the destroying axe."

"The Sandal Tree perfumes when riven
The axe that lays it low;
Let man, who hopes to be forgiven,
Forgive and bless his foe."

How much of the spirit of the Gospel is here conveyed!

I propose next to speak upon the *lying* tongue. Who can estimate the injury done by lies? 'Twas a lie that forfeited Eden; 'twas a lie that added to the condemnation of Cain; 'twas a lie that ruined Ananias and Sapphira, and God's Word is very full of warning to us. "Liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." Rev. xxi. 8. Perhaps some of you may feel, "well that will not be my lot, for I scorn to tell a lie." Most sincerely do I hope it may be so, but, although speaking upon the lying tongue, let me remind you that there are lies in action, which are meant to do all the mischief that the spoken lie can do. Let me give you a few simple, but common illustrations. The boy or girl who plays in class while appearing to pay all attention to teacher is guilty of a lie, and so is he or she who pretends to be learning attentively, while all the time at mischief under the desk; so also is the girl who just sweeps the floor where it can be seen, instead of doing it thoroughly as requested by her mother; and yet again, so does the boy who wastes his master's time while pretending to do his errands with all diligence. "Oh!" but, say you, "these are not sins of the tongue;" very true, my dear children, but they are their first cousins, and must be guarded against in earnest prayer.

Next in order comes the *careless* tongue, a matter of small moment think some, but let me tell you it is one fearfully destructive to the soul. Hear the Saviour's own words, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment," St. Matt. xii. 36; and who is there amongst us who must not plead guilty to having again and again offended in this way. Now for a few homely illustrations on this point also. How often do you say to teacher, "Oh, I can't learn that collect, or that lesson, so its no use trying," when the fact is, you have never fairly tried: or "I can't get here in time, I've tried it and it can't be done." Now I remember this latter difficulty disappearing in a marvellous manner in a certain school I might mention, and how do you think that was? Why, the Superintendent gave notice "*that no prizes would be given to any boy or girl who was not generally regular and early.*" True, behaviour and lessons were to count with this; but no child who was not generally in time for the opening prayer could take a prize. Well, do you know, somehow or other (I need not tell you how,) the difficulty vanished, and early attendance became the rule, and not the exception. But there are other idle expressions I must notice, and I must do it very seriously. Such for instance as "Goodness gracious!" "Oh, lawks!" and others of the same family whilst amongst the vulgar is another a deal too common, it is "Oh, my eye!" These are all idle words, for which the Saviour says an account must be rendered. Let me tell you an anecdote of the fearful visitation of God upon a common profane expression which occurred when I was a boy. A man of violent temper, who spared neither oaths nor threats to carry his point, had one favourite imprecation whenever his listeners ventured to doubt any of his assertions, it was this; "May God strike me dead if it is not true!" Well, one day he was in a passion because his hearers would not believe some fearful falsehood,—the usual oath was uttered, and God taking him at his word, he fell a lifeless corpse, to the horror of all beholders. It is not for me to say

what must be his last condition; but the Bible gives us terrible descriptions of what will be the lot of the swearer and the profane.

I can mention but one more sin of the tongue to-day, and that is the poisonous *slanderous* tongue, which like the slimy slug, leaves its marks on all it touches, or like the graceless viper, stings the breast which warmed it into life. David, speaking of slanderers, says, "They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent, the poison of asps is under their lips," Ps. cxl. 3. This sin frequently arises from jealousy. A school-fellow is more successful than we are, and then Satan suggests the wicked thought, and we unjustly accuse teacher as well as scholar of unfair dealing. The love of praise will sometimes tempt us to ungenerous speeches about others, or our actions may perhaps work more effectually than our speeches. One of the incidents connected with David's flight before Absalom affords us an illustration of this. After the defeat of his unnatural son, and when returning to Jerusalem, he asked Mephibosheth, who came to meet him, why he had not gone with him when in trouble. To which the other replied, that his servant had *slandered* him, that as he was lame he was obliged to ride, and had accordingly ordered his ass to be brought, but that this was not done at the right time, and so the king had been led to feel that Mephibosheth had slighted him. The slander on the part of the servant was cunningly devised, and for a time gained its object, but the king accepted the explanation offered and forgave him, 2 Sam. xix.

Would we imitate our blessed Lord in forgiving those who injure us, we must make David's prayer our own, that we may avoid the sins which he so much dreaded. Now, my dear children, I do not tell you that this is an easy task, the Bible does not say it is: for although it tells us that "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace," yet it tells of the way of life, that it is strait and difficult, while at the same time it tells us where we may find strength for all, even in Jesus, and that "His grace is sufficient for us, for His strength is made perfect in weakness." May he bless this subject to us all! J. F. R.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES ON THE INVITATIONS: IV.

"Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

ISAIAH LV. 3.

DEAR CHILDREN,

In this invitation God is shown offering to make an everlasting covenant with us. But, alas! except our ears are inclined *to hear*, the sure mercies of David will have no charms for us—we shall be like the deaf adder, refusing to listen to the charmer's voice, charm he never so wisely, Ps. lviii. 4, 5.

I.

1. *The guests* are those whose ears the god of this world has made dull of hearing; and this still small voice which offers to guilty sinners pardon and peace, is unheeded by them. This mental *deafness* is shown in an obstinate refusal to *obey*, and God's word is filled with warnings against it. How

often does it happen that parents endeavour to dissuade a child from some course which their own wiser experience of life has taught them can but end in ruin, and how frequently in vain! Many a criminal might have been spared the bitter remorse of after years had he but hearkened to a father's commands, or a mother's entreaties to avoid the first evil companion who tempted him to sin. In Ps. lxxxi. 11—16, God is represented under this parental aspect, sorrowing over His people's ***deafness***. ***Obedience*** is but the outward act of the ***hearing ear;*** and, by acts of ***disobedience***, are implied ears dull of ***hearing***. Our Lord, in His parable in Matt. xxi. 28, shows us what God means by ***hearing***, and plainly puts forth ***obedience*** as the test of having heard. Nor does the teaching of the Apostles vary from that of their Master, for St. Paul tells us, in Rom. x. 17, that "***faith cometh by hearing;***" and St. James, throughout his Epistle, shows us that works in conformity to God's holy mind and will must be the ***evidence*** to man that this ***faith*** is alive within us, even as our Lord tells us "a good tree ***cannot*** bring forth evil fruit," Matt. vii. 15—20.

We are all, dear children, by nature, in this sense, ***deaf;*** and of this Adam and Eve in Paradise are the first examples. True, they heard with their outward ears the command "***not*** to eat," but the god of this world had deafened their ***mental ears***, so that they ***disobeyed***. Noah preached long years before the flood came of the impending judgment; but the words of this preacher of righteousness fell on ears too ***dull to hear***, and God's long suffering was disregarded, 1 Peter iii. 20; 2 Peter ii. 5. So with Sodom and Gomorrah; when Lot delivered his message of warning he seemed as one that mocked, Gen. xix. 14. Saul learnt, at the cost of his earthly kingdom, "that to ***obey*** is better than sacrifice, and to ***hearken*** than the blood of rams," 1 Sam. xv. 22. And the final appeal of the Saviour to His deafened countrymen is the last recorded instance of the sad consequences of disobedience. Well might He weep, Luke xix. 41.

2. The ***terms*** of the invitation. "An everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David." In 2 Chron. xiii. 5, this everlasting covenant is called a covenant of salt, and therefore most holy. In Numbers xviii. 19, this covenant of salt is mentioned, and in Lev. ii. 13 a special injunction is given to the Jews not to omit offering salt with their sacrifices. It is a well known fact that, amongst the Eastern nations, partaking of salt with any one is regarded as an inviolable pledge of good faith. "He will ever be mindful of His covenant" is one of the characteristics of our God, Psalm cxi. 5, and in tracing all God's dealings with His people we shall find it true. The oath made to Abraham, Genesis xvii. 7, was never forgotten, and in spite of their rebellion and shortcomings God established his descendants in the land of promise, Deut. vii. 8., and after they were settled there, though their frequent idolatries caused God to deliver them into their enemies' hand, yet on their repenting God pardoned and delivered them from the Midianites by the hand of Gideon, Judges vi., from the Philistines under Samuel, 1 Sam. vii. 3. And this brings us down to David's time, when the oath made to Abraham having been fulfilled, and by its fulfilment having passed away, God enters into a special covenant with David of an everlasting kingdom, and to this oath, though that "house was not right with Him," God continued faithful, 2. Sam. vii. 15 Instances of God's faithfulness for His servant David's sake will be found in 1 Kings xi. 34—36; 2 Kings xix. 34. Jehoshaphat left his kingdom to Jehoram his firstborn, for though Jehoram had no virtue to merit it, and it must have grieved the good king to leave so much power in the hands of a monster

whose first act was to imbrue his hands in his brethren's blood, yet the crown was his birthright, and in spite of Jehoram's wickedness, God remained true to His everlasting covenant, 2 Chron. xxi. 5—7. Nor is this everlasting covenant done away, and in the invitation we are considering it is used as an example of what God will do for His people. Numerous figures are made use of in the Bible to assure us of our safety. We are compared to sheep, John x. 27—29; the apple of the eye, Deut. xxxii. 10; Psalm xvii. 8; Zech. ii. 8; chickens under the mother's wing, Psalm xvii. 8; xxxvi. 7; lxi. 4; lxiii. 7; xci. 4. God is likened to a tower, Psalm xviii. 2; lxi. 3; Prov. xviii. 10; a refuge, such as was the ark in the day of the flood, Deut. xxxiii. 27; 1 Sam. xxii. 3; Psalm ix. 7; Prov. xiv. 26; Is. xxv. 4; Jer. xvi. 19; and many others,—such as a rock, a shield, etc.

II.

1. The *preparation* for, and *answer* to this invitation. Dear children, though centuries have gone by since this message was sent to the Jews by the mouth of God's holy prophet Isaiah, it is ever new, and has the same meaning for us now, as it was intended to have for them.

1. The *preparation*. Going to Jesus to have our ears unstopped. We may indeed hear the sound of this invitation, but to understand its meaning, we need, as did the deaf man in Mark vii. 31, to be taken apart from the multitude that He may put His fingers in our ears. During our Saviour's life the time came for the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy, "that the ears of the deaf should be unstopped," Is. xxix. 13; xxxv. 5; xliii. 8, and as a complete answer to John Baptist's wavering faith when he asks, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" Jesus refers him to the miracles He was working, Luke vii. 19—23.

2. The *answer* is *obedience*. When we once receive and fully trust God's promises, how gladly do we *obey* His voice! *Obedience* and *rebellion* are throughout the Bible contrasted together as the test of those who *serve* God, and those who serve Him *not*. Is. i. 19, 20. Rebellion was the besetting sin of the Jewish nation, Deut. ix. 7. Let us profit by the warning given in Prov. xxix. 1, for there is a time coming when we shall *not* be able to *stop* our *ears*, John v. 28, 29; but *must hear* the Son of Man pronounce our everlasting doom, whether for weal or woe.

S. B.

FAITH IN CHRIST.—"The true meaning of faith in Christ, or in God through Christ, is not merely or properly belief of the truth of the Scripture narrative concerning our Lord; or an assent of the understanding to certain propositions derived from that narrative, however true, and however important they be; but that it is TRUST in Christ, or in God through Christ, founded upon such a belief or assent; an entire or unreserved *confidence* in the efficacy of what Christ has done and suffered for us; a full *reliance* upon Him, and upon His work."—*Bishop O'Brien, of Ossory.*

NOTES OF A LESSON ON THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC, COMPARED WITH THAT OF CHRIST.

FOR A BIBLE CLASS.

MY dear young friends, the subject we have selected for consideration to-day is "The Correspondence between the Sacrifice of Isaac and that of Christ." There seem to be some very striking points of analogy, though the type is necessarily imperfect, but still sufficient, with the teaching of the Holy Spirit, to give God's ancient people some dim idea of the Saviour. Have we not reason to rejoice that our lot is cast in these days, when the types are all withdrawn, or rather fulfilled in Jesus, who has revealed himself to His people as the Great Antitype, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world?

We will first compare the Type with the Antitype, showing the agreement, and then, in dependence on the Holy Spirit, who alone can guide us into all truth, endeavour to find out the lessons which God would have us learn from the whole.

Isaac was the son, the only beloved son of Abraham, Gen. xxii. 1—18.

Jesus was the only-begotten beloved Son of God, John iii. 16.

Isaac was obedient to his father's will.

Jesus gave himself a willing sacrifice for us, Ps. xl. 7, 8; John iv. 34.

Isaac might be said to be virtually dead to his father during the three days' journey, Heb. xi. 17—19.

Jesus was three days in the grave, 1 Cor. xv. 4.

Isaac bare the wood for the burnt offering, Gen. xxii. 26.

Jesus bare His cross, John xix. 17.

The offering up of Isaac was, as we are told in Scripture, the test of Abraham's faith in God's promises; but it seems as if God would by it teach him an important lesson, namely the penalty due to sin. It is the opinion of some that Gen. xxii. 8, might be read in this manner;—"God will provide, Himself, a Lamb for a burnt offering." If so, it would be a proof of Abraham's having learnt the lesson of faith in the Saviour—the Lamb of God; and the ram caught in a thicket by its horns, which Abraham was commanded to offer up in the stead of his son, would seem designed to point to the substitute of an innocent victim for the guilty: "He who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth," was to suffer and die in the stead of sinful man.

The two sacrifices of Isaac and the Lamb might be designed to foreshadow the two-fold nature of our blessed Saviour, the first mentioned being a type of His humanity and the latter of His godhead.

I want you now to consider the Scripture proofs that Jesus died in our stead, not merely (as the Unitarians and unhappily some in our own Church affirm) to save us from sin, but to appease the wrath of God due to sin—to satisfy the justice of God. It will be best perhaps in the first instance to bring Scripture proofs, that not only are we the enemies of God by wicked works, but that our sins have provoked His wrath. We need only turn to the curse pronounced on Cain after the murder of Abel, Gen. iv. 10—12. We must take the character of God as He has revealed it to us in His Word, and then we cannot be wrong, for however irreconcilable one attribute may seem to be with another, they are not really so. He is just and yet merciful, it is only those who reject Him that He casts out for ever. In Hosea ix. 15, there is a very striking proof of God's anger against sinners.

"All their wickedness is in Gilgal, for here I hated them: for the wickedness of their doings, I will drive them out of my house, I will love them no more." In Ps. xxxviii. 1—4, David prays, "Oh, Lord rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger;" and in Is. xlii. 4, 25, we find that because the house of Israel were not obedient to the laws of the Lord, therefore He "poured upon them the fury of His anger;" and 2 Thess. i. 7—9 we are told that those that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."

Do you not think these texts are sufficient to prove that God is angry with His people who sin, though in wrath He remembers mercy? It is not enough for us who have sinned to be told that Jesus was manifested merely to redeem us from the curse of the law, (that is as our opponents explain it, from breaking the law) we need a Saviour who can set us free from the penalty due to sin, who will bear away our iniquities so that they be remembered against us no more for ever. We know that through breaking the commandments we have incurred the righteous anger of God; and He must be faithful to His word, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." How then shall we escape this penalty? Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. Thus God is just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, whose blood not only cleanses us from sin, but atones for our sin and reconciles us to God, "for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul." The cry of a sinner convinced of sin, is "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God?" We dare not approach the Mercy-seat till our Advocate—one with the Father, yet not ashamed to call us brethren; free from human infirmity, yet bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh; able to sympathise with our weakness, strong to save and mighty to redeem,—reveals Himself to us; then have we boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus. Beheld in Him, we are brought to know our God as He is indeed, a God of love, a tender Father, the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth. We receive the adoption of sons by faith in Christ Jesus; and here we see how Isaac was typical of Christ in another sense. As Isaac was accounted the only son of Abraham, and the children of the promise were counted for a seed, for the Scripture says "in Isaac shall the seed be called," so those only who are in Christ Jesus, may be accounted the sons of God. Rom. xi. 15; Gal. iii. 26, "But ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." My dear young friends let nothing rob you of this hope; cling to Jesus, and you are safe; reject Him, and blackness of darkness must be your portion for ever. He is a Rock, and though the waves of this troublesome world dash around you, they cannot reach you to harm you, He will be a shield and hiding-place. If you have not yet accepted Him as your substitute, close now with His offers of mercy. He bids you come, sinner as you are. "For God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

NOTES OF LESSONS ON THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE, FOR SENIOR CLASSES.

The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians.

This Letter was addressed to the Christian inhabitants of Philippi, a city of Macedonia, and a Roman colony, which is also especially interesting as being the first place in Europe at which St. Paul preached, about A.D. 53 (Acts xvi. 9, 10). The converts there were numerous, and strongly attached to him; and hearing of his imprisonment at Rome in the time of Nero, sent one of their pastors, Epaphroditus, to express their sympathy, and to offer any help they could render him. During his stay with St. Paul at Rome, their messenger had a severe illness, but on his recovery, he returned to Philippi, and became the bearer of this Epistle. From these details, we are able to fix its date during the latter part of the two years of St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome (Acts xxviii. 30, 31), when he was expecting a decision on his cause (ch. i. 19, ii. 27). He speaks of the converts he had gained even in the household of the infamous Emperor Nero (ch. iv. 22), and of his sufferings for Christ being known in the palace (ch. i. 13); and as he expresses his hope of visiting the Philippians in a short time (ch. ii. 24—26), the date of the Epistle may be fixed almost with certainty in A.D. 62.

It breathes the language of grateful affection for the persons addressed, and from the absence of censure, and the frequent expressions of praise it contains, bears testimony to the high Christian character of the Church at Philippi. Its believers there had shown constancy under persecution (ch. i. 28, 29), devotion to their first teacher (ii. 12), liberality to other Churches (iv. 15), and had kept themselves free from the doctrinal errors and schisms which the Apostle had to condemn in other Epistles. The only fault among them of which he speaks is a spirit of pride and contention, especially between two of their members (ch. iv. 2, 3).

After a salutation in his own name and in that of Timothy, St. Paul expresses his thankfulness to God for making the Philippians partakers of the privileges of the Gospel; he prays for their farther advance in holiness, and exhorts them earnestly to walk worthy of their calling, and to be fearless of their adversaries (ch. i.); urges them to exercise humility after the example of Christ, and to live peaceably together; tells them of his state, of Epaphroditus their messenger, and of his intention to send Timothy to them, and perhaps to visit them himself (ch. ii). In ch. iii. he warns them against the Judaizing teachers, who were actively at work in their neighbourhood, and informs them of his own doings in promoting the knowledge of Christ, urging them to imitate him in that respect (ch. iii.), and in the last chapter adds some further exhortations, expresses his thankfulness for their oft-repeated liberality and affection for him, and concludes with salutations, and his autograph benediction. Throughout the Epistle he adopts a tone of warm affection for those whom he addresses; and, while anticipating the decision as to his own fate with some apprehension that it might be adverse to him (see ch. ii. 17, iii. 10—14), expresses with joyful fervency his hopeful faith in the glory which would be his portion in a better world. It breathes the spirit of a matured Christian—one who felt that he might soon "be with Christ," and who could regard death as a release from earthly toil and suffering. Happy are all who are thus ripening for the great Harvest!

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians.

The same loving anxiety which prompted the Philippian Christians to send Epaphroditus to Rome during St. Paul's imprisonment there, led the believers at Colosse, to send Epaphras, one of their chief pastors, to the Apostle, to enquire after his welfare, and to inform him of their state. In acknowledgment of their sympathy, he wrote this Epistle, sending it by the hands of Tychicus and Onesimus (chap. iv. 7—9), who were also the bearers of two other letters—the one the Epistle now described as addressed to the Ephesians, and the other borne by Onesimus to his master Philemon. All were written much about the same time, in the latter part of St. Paul's first imprisonment during the two years A.D. 61, 62, when he dwelt in his own house (Acts xxviii. 30), although in the custody of the Prætorian Præfect, at Rome.

It is not known by whom the Church of Colosse, a city of Phrygia in Asia Minor, was planted. St. Paul was in that country in the years 51 and 53 (Acts xv. 40, 41; xviii. 23), and may have himself preached the Gospel there—but no intimation of the fact is given—while some have thought from Col. i. 7, that Epaphras was the founder of that Church. He was then a fellow-prisoner with St. Paul (chap. iv. 12), and had made known to him the unwelcome tidings that the faith of the Colossians was in danger of being perverted by the false teaching, as it would appear, of a single individual (see chap. ii.), who seems to have been a Jewish convert, insisting on the one hand on a rigid observance of the festivals and Sabbaths, but who combined with his doctrine a philosophy which depreciated Christ, and mingled angel-worship and asceticism with his creed (chap. ii. 8—19). Acting under the direction of the Holy Spirit, St. Paul was moved by this report to endeavour to counteract the evil of such teaching among the Gentile Christians of Colosse. This he does by setting forth the Atonement and Sovereignty of Christ, and the universality of salvation in Him, and by indicating that pure morality which must spring from the heavenly affections of true believers in Christ.

After the salutation and thanksgiving for their conversion, he prays for their increase in spiritual knowledge of the Gospel, declares the great truths of the grace of God in Christ Jesus (chap. i.), and cautions them against being seduced from the simplicity of the faith, either by Pagan philosophy, or Jewish superstition (chap. ii.)—urging them to put away every species of vice and impurity, and to set their affections on things above; not only to cultivate the perfection of the Christian character in general, but in particular to fulfil the duties of domestic life, and in the relations of slaves and masters (chap. iii.). In the concluding chapter he asks for their prayers on his behalf, advises them how to conduct themselves towards unbelievers, describes his object in sending Tychicus and Onesimus, sends messages to them from the Christians in Rome, and to the Churches both of Colosse and Laodicea—and concludes with the salutation written with his own hand, adding to the superscription, "remember my chains," to call forth their sympathy and love, and to induce them the more readily to yield to his teaching.

See in this Epistle the completeness of the salvation offered by Christ to all who believe (chap. i., ii.), and the fruits of faith by which we may assure ourselves that we are His people (chap. iii., iv.).

The Epistles to the Thessalonians.

Thessalonica was the capital of Macedonia in the time of St. Paul; it was a seaport, and a large city, and is now a Turkish commercial town (Saloniki). It was then inhabited by Jews, proselytes to the worship of the synagogue, Greeks, and Romans. At the preaching of the Apostle, when he visited the city in company with Silas, some of all these classes, including many idolaters, became converts to the faith of Christ, Acts xvii. The malice and violence of the Jews, however, drove the preachers from the city; but, on his arrival at Athens, Paul sent Timothy to Thessalonica to enquire as to the conduct of the new converts, and to confirm them in their faith. When he returned, St. Paul was at Corinth (Acts xviii. 5), from whence he wrote the first of these Epistles, about the year A.D. 52, treating in it of the subjects suggested by the accounts Timothy gave him. It is especially interesting as it is supposed to be the first of all St. Paul's Epistles.

In the *first* Epistle, after saluting the Christians, and thanking God for their faith and patience, he shows the Divine origin of the Gospel in its power upon their souls (chap. i.), reminds them of his boldness in preaching among them, comforts them under the persecutions which they had experienced from their unbelieving countrymen, denounces the guilt of the Jews in resisting the preaching of the Gospel, and expresses his desire, and hitherto fruitless endeavour, to see them again (chap. ii.); but that, being hindered, he had sent Timothy, whose report of their constancy had filled his heart with joy (chap. iii.). In the two concluding chapters (iv. v.), he exhorts them to increasing diligence in obeying Christ, to the exercise of purity, justice, love, and quietness, and dissuades them against immoderate sorrow for departed friends, by the assurance of Christ coming to raise the dead, to change the living, and to unite all His people to Himself; and, hence, taking the opportunity to warn them all to prepare for the Judgment Day.

It would seem from the *Second* Epistle that the messenger who bore the former one to Thessalonica reported to St. Paul, on his return, that his words respecting the coming of Christ and the Final Judgment had led the believers, to whom they were addressed, to infer that those events were so near at hand that they would happen in the time of many who were then alive, and had led them to abandon their ordinary occupations. The Apostle, therefore, wrote immediately to explain his real meaning; and hence the *Second* Epistle, which begins by expressing his gratitude to God for their increasing faith, and mutual love in the midst of persecution, and then reminds them of the eternal rewards of the faithful, and the doom of the disobedient at the second advent of Christ, explaining that they were not to suppose he meant them to believe that that event was near at hand, since a great apostacy would precede it, and entreating them to use the more diligence and stedfastness in consequence (chap. i. ii.). In chap. iii. he requests their prayers for himself and the preachers of the Gospel, charges them to censure those who idly neglected to fulfil the duties of their several stations, and concludes with several earnest exhortations to godly quietness, and with his usual benediction.

Turned from serving idols, as many of these early Christians were, the character given of them by the Apostle, for holiness and zeal, should make us, with our greater advantages, enquire whether we resemble them in these things.

The Epistles of Paul to Timothy.

These letters are addressed to one who was long the travelling companion of St. Paul, and a fellow-labourer with him in making known the Gospel. From 1 Tim. i. 2 it is inferred that he owed his conversion to the Apostle; and from Acts xvi. we learn he was a native of Lystra, in Lycaonia, of mixed parentage, his father being a Greek, his mother a member of a pious Jewish family, who had carefully trained him in the Scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Paul's acquaintance with him began some fourteen years before the first of these Epistles was written, when he was quite a youth, 1 Tim. iv. 12; but he found him so excellent and so zealous that, after having him circumcised (to avoid giving offence to the Jews), he ordained him to the ministry of the Gospel (2 Tim. i. 6), with the approval of the Presbytery (1 Tim. iv. 14). Subsequently, he frequently accompanied the Apostle in his journies, and was employed by him in other places. He became the Bishop of Ephesus, and was filling that office when these Epistles were written by St. Paul. He is reported to have suffered martyrdom in that city some years after the death of the Apostle.

The *first* Epistle written, as is supposed, after St. Paul's first imprisonment and his subsequent journey into Spain, was occasioned by the reports which had reached him of heretical teachers having arisen in the very bosom of the Church at Ephesus. Fearing that they might question the authority of their still youthful bishop, St. Paul writes to confirm, by his own word, his position as their chief pastor, urges him to the faithful discharge of his sacred office, and in so doing has left to the Church at large a guide and pattern for the character of its ministers (chap. i.—iii.). He gives various rules for the organisation and government of the Ephesian Church, which would be received with submission direct from its Apostolic founder, and denounces the false teachers, asserting the nature of the Gospel, and its superiority over the Law, foretelling apostacy and false teaching in the latter times, and by these considerations exhorting his beloved son in the faith, in affectionate and confiding terms, to fulfil his high calling as God's minister (chap. iv.—vi.).

The *second* Epistle to Timothy was the last ever written by the Apostle, shortly before his death, during his second imprisonment at Rome, about A.D. 65, when he was nearly seventy years of age, and was evidently intensely anxious for the constancy of those whom he had brought to Jesus in earlier years. To all these he clings with fatherly interest, and to none more than to Timothy who had so long ministered to him with filial affection. He was then far away, but he sent to urge him to come with all speed to Rome, that he might see his face once more (2 Tim. iv. 9, 21). Doubting whether he might not arrive too late, he wrote these parting words, urging him, with pathetic tenderness and deep solemnity, to be bold for the cause of Christ; to be steadfast, as he himself was, under persecution, and not to shrink from suffering with His people; adding also, in his concern for his Ephesian converts, an exhortation to him to oppose the heresies which were destroying the roots of their faith; and charging him, in consequence, the more faithfully and earnestly to fulfil the various duties of his office as Christ's ordained minister among them (chap. i.—iv.). Mingled with these things are many touching words as to St. Paul's own experience and hopes, which are a noble testimony to his faithfulness to the end, and the certainty that those who love and serve their Saviour in sincerity will not fail of their great reward (see 2 Tim. i. 11—12; iv. 6—18). Must we not all feel, as we read his last words, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like *his!*"

The Epistle of St. Paul to Titus.

The only information we possess respecting the history of the person addressed in this (the third of the pastoral Epistles) is gathered from the writings of St. Paul. Titus was a Greek (Gal. ii. 3), converted to the faith apparently by the Apostle himself (Titus i. 4). He went from Antioch to the Council at Jerusalem in the year 49 (Gal. ii. 1), and was constantly employed as a partner and fellow-helper of St. Paul (2 Cor. viii. 23). He was the bearer of both the Epistles to the Corinthians, and made the collections in Macedonia for the saints in Judea. After St. Paul's first imprisonment, he was left by the Apostle in Crete to "set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain elders in every city" (Titus i. 5). On all occasions St. Paul speaks of him in terms of the highest approbation and most cordial affection. He is said to have returned to Crete after the death of St. Paul, and to have died there in his ninety-fourth year.

Crete is one of the largest islands in the Mediterranean, and is now called Candia. Some of its inhabitants were present at Jerusalem on the great day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 11), and probably introduced the Gospel on their return home. Its people were notorious for covetousness and self-indulgence (Titus i. 12), and many of them would seem to have led very profligate lives even after they embraced the profession of the Christian faith.

The date when this Epistle was written can be fixed, pretty certainly, between the First and Second Epistles to Timothy,—for from the three Epistles it would seem that after writing 1 Tim. from Macedonia, St. Paul fulfilled his intention (1 Tim. iii. 14) of returning to Ephesus by way of Troas, where he left the books &c., with Carpus mentioned in 2 Tim. iv. 13; that from Ephesus he made a short expedition to Crete and back, and on his return wrote to Titus (Titus i. 5); and that immediately after dispatching this letter he went by Miletus to Corinth (2 Tim. iv. 20), and thence to Nicopolis in Epirus, where he meant to spend the approaching winter (Titus iii. 12), and from thence he went in A.D. 65 to Rome for the last time.

The object of St. Paul in writing to Titus, was very similar to that which prompted the First Epistle to Timothy,—to direct him in the proper discharge of his various and important duties, in organising the Church in the island which St. Paul had not been able to accomplish before he left it, and also to confirm his authority, which had evidently been disputed and opposed by some of those among whom he laboured. He begins by stating his special object in leaving him in Crete, and what manner of persons he should ordain as elders; and commands him sharply to rebuke the false teachers, and the vices of the people (chap. i.), informs him what instructions he should give to people in different situations of life, and exhorts him to be exemplary in his own conduct; he points out the pure and practical nature of the Gospel (chap. ii.), directs him to inculcate subjection to rulers, and good behaviour to all men, cautions him to avoid foolish disputes, and how to deal with heretics, and concludes with salutations (chap. iii.).

Besides the invaluable advice to ministers respecting the regulation and edification of the Church which this Epistle contains, there is a summary of the whole Gospel in chap. ii. 11—14; iii. 4—8; hence it is a message to all.

The Epistle of St. Paul to Philemon.

Among the disciples ministering to the Apostle at Rome during his long confinement there, was one in whom (from his previous history and peculiar position at that time) he evidently felt a special interest, and in whose behalf he wrote this very touching letter to Philemon, an inhabitant of Colosse, and probably a person of some consideration in that city, who owed his conversion to Christ to the ministry of the Apostle (verse 20).

We gather from the letter itself, that Onesimus, a fugitive slave belonging to Philemon, had robbed his master (verses 18—20), and having fled from Colosse had found his way to Rome. There he was converted to the faith of Christ, by means of the captive Apostle (verse 11), and displayed so much contrition for the sins of his past life, and exhibited so many characteristics of a higher and better nature, that he seems to have won the especial affection of the aged servant of Christ (verses 10, 16). Evidently St. Paul would have wished to retain Onesimus with him, and to have employed him in the service of his Lord: but he would not violate the rights of his own master, according to the law as it then existed, and he therefore determined to send him back to Philemon. This letter was to explain what had inspired, and to ensure his pardon from his master—for without it, the Apostle knew it was competent for him to punish his slave for such an offence, without the interference of the magistrate. St. Paul sent Onesimus in company with his own honoured companion Tychicus, the bearer of a letter to the Church at Colosse, to make all the brethren there know the estimation in which he held the penitent slave (Col. iv. 9), and at the same time charging Philemon to receive him "not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved specially to me" (verse 16). He pleads earnestly, and by claims of personal affection and obligations not to be resisted, in behalf of his adopted son in the faith, and engages, if required, himself to make full compensation for any injury Philemon may have sustained by the misconduct of Onesimus, urging him to receive his servant in the now endeared relation of a Christian brother, for the Apostle's sake.

The delicacy of feeling and courtesy with which the appeal is made—the tender-heartedness of the suffering Apostle for his new convert—his remembrance of the virtues of the master to whom he belonged—the tact with which he refers to them, and to their mutual regard—his wish to see Philemon again in his own home (verse 22)—his confidence in his readiness, not only to accede to his request, but to do much more than he asked (verse 21)—all present the character of the Apostle to us in a very endearing light, and also show how the spirit of the religion of Christ worked, not in violently changing the civil condition of men, but by leavening their hearts so as to bring them to understand the equality of all in the sight of God.

What a lesson of love, forbearance, and humility, is here taught us all! But especially what an example to those in the relation of master and servant:—for, here is the master's anger appeased, and the unfaithful servant induced to return to him, penitent and reclaimed, ready to make up for past wrong-doing by future devotedness, no longer in eye-service but as "unto the Lord,"—and all by the power of the Gospel working upon their hearts.

The Epistle to the Hebrews.

Although there never has been any doubt entertained in the Christian Church as to the Divine inspiration of this valuable portion of the Holy Scriptures, a variety of opinions have been expressed as to its authorship, principally arising from the circumstances that no name of the writer is given in the Epistle itself, and that those to whom it is addressed are not distinctly specified. The conclusion of the majority, however, is that it was written by St. Paul, who may have purposely omitted his usual salutation, to avoid his arguments being rejected by Hebrew Christians generally, from personal prejudice against himself as the Apostle of the Gentiles, although it is evident that the persons addressed knew from whence the Epistle came, for subjects of interest to them are specially mentioned, and salutations given (Heb. x. 34; xiii. 18—24). As it was written in Greek, and the numerous quotations from the Old Testament contained in it are all made from the Septuagint Greek and not from the Hebrew version, it has been reasonably supposed to have been addressed to the Jewish converts at Alexandria, or to those Jews called Grecians (from using that language), belonging to one of the Churches planted by St. Paul. From the concluding verse, it is supposed to have been written from Rome after his first imprisonment, about A.D. 63.

The object of the Epistle is to induce the Jewish Christians to regard the Gospel as the completion and perfect consummation of Judaism—to behold in Christ the fulfilment of the law, and in His offices the complete realization of the sacrificial and mediatorial functions of the Jewish priesthood and service. Its readers are assumed to be familiar with the Levitical worship, the Temple service, and all the institutions of the Mosaic ritual. To warn them against the danger to which they were exposed of apostatising from Christianity, and returning to Judaism (chap. xii. 3, 4), they are here taught to look through the shadow of the Mosaic system to its substance in the Gospel, and through the type of the old dispensation to the great Antitype in the new: thus the Holy Ghost has also taught the universal Church the design of the old covenant, in this Divine commentary on the Old Testament Scriptures.

Lest the glory of the promulgation of the Law to Moses should be contrasted with the humiliation and death of Christ as an argument against the Gospel, the Epistle commences by showing that the same God who had in times past spoken to the fathers by the prophets, now sent His Son to declare His will; it then describes His dignity and power, His Divine authority, and the duty of obedience to Him (chap. i.). The writer next points out the necessity of Christ's incarnation and passion (chap. ii.): shows the superiority of our Lord to Moses, and warns the Hebrews against the sin of unbelief (chap. iii.); he then exhorts to stedfastness in the Christian profession, and describes our Lord as the great High Priest (chap. iv. to vii.), and proceeds to show that the Levitical priesthood and the old covenant were abolished in the priesthood of Christ, and the ceremonies and sacrifices of the law done away by the atoning Sacrifice of the Cross (chap. viii.—x.); he then fully explains and illustrates the nature and effects of faith (chap. xi.), and in the two last chapters gives a variety of admonitions to encourage the Hebrews to constancy in the trials which might be their portion, and concludes with the benediction usually given by St. Paul.

All preceding revelations are thus shown to find their completion in Christ, and the faith of the Old Testament saints to have led them to Him (chap. xi.). Oh that we may obtain a like faith to theirs!

The General Epistle of St. James.

Following the Epistles of St. Paul are seven written by other Apostles, which ıave been classed together as the Catholic or General Epistles, because most of hem were not addressed, as those of St. Paul, to particular churches or persons ıut to believers in general. Some unfounded doubts as to the genuineness of ɔme of these Epistles arose in early times, but since the fourth century they have ll been universally admitted into the sacred canon.

Two Apostles were named James, one the son of Zebedee and brother of John; he other the son of Alphæus or Cleophas, and called by way of distinction James *le less*, or the younger (Mark xv. 40). The latter is usually regarded as the uthor of the Epistle by St. James, the former having been beheaded by Herod ıgrippa in the year 44, and this Epistle not having been written for many years fterwards, since it speaks of the destruction of Jerusalem as being very near at and. Its date is variously stated about the year 61, shortly before the death of s author, whose life was sacrificed in a tumult raised by the unbelieving Jews in erusalem in the year 62. He is described in Church history as the first Bishop f Jerusalem, but he is not so called in Scripture, although it is evident that he eld an important position in the holy city, where he seems to have repaired fter the other Apostles were scattered abroad to preach the Gospel. He pre-ded at the council held there, and gave the final decision on the matters brought efore it, as recorded in Acts xv., and he is especially named as one of the "pil-rs" of the Church in Gal. i. 18, 19; ii. 9; see also Acts xii. 17; xxi. 18, -24.

The purpose of the Epistle is evidently to animate the Jewish Christians to ear with patience and fortitude the sufferings to which they were about to e exposed, and to insist upon the necessity of personal holiness as necesssary to lvation, in opposition to those corrupt teachers who pretended that if justified ithout the deeds of the law, they were consequently freed from its moral obli-ations, and who thus perverted the doctrine of justification by faith into an xcuse for sin. There is no opposition, as some have supposed, between the teach-ıg of St. James and St. Paul on this point; for the former simply insists on the ıfluence of saving religion upon the practice in the life, and the latter, not refer-ıg to this question, lays down the principle of justification by faith alone without he deeds of the law. When speaking of the same things their teaching is iden-ical; compare James i. 22 with Rom. ii. 13; James i. 15 and Rom. vii. 7, 8; ames i. 2, 3, and Rom. v. 3.

Addressing his Epistle to the Jewish Christians, St. James exhorts them to atience and constancy, to humble and prayerful trust in God, and points out the lessings of faithful endurance to the end; he then counsels them to the exercise f practical religion in daily life, and warns them especially against pride and nger, and of being only hearers and not doers of the word (chap. i.). He next njoins a just and impartial regard for the poor (chap. ii. 1—9), and shows that aith without works is dead (ii. 10—26); advises a strict control over the tongue nd cautions them against censoriousness, strife, pride, self-indulgence, and hasty udgment (chap. iii.; iv.). He denounces the condemnation of God against those who misuse their riches in the times of trial then approaching (chap. v. 1 —6); and concludes by instructing the Christians to be zealous in promoting the conversion of others, and in the practice of a holy life (v. 7– 20).

Let us see that *we* are not hearers only, but doers of the word,—for this is the ure test of the reality of that living faith by which alone we are saved.

The Epistles of St. Peter.

Two Epistles are included in the Sacred Canon written by St. Peter, whose personal history is fully brought before us in the Gospels, and whose characteristics of self-confidence and impetuous zeal, contrasted with timidity and dissimulation are so sadly illustrated there. His sermon on the day of Pentecost, and his speech at the Council of Jerusalem, are recorded in the Acts, but no mention is made in Scripture of his after labours, except at Antioch (Gal. ii. 11—14). He is, however, described by early historians as having preached to the Jews of the dispersion in various parts of Asia Minor, and as having gone to Rome about the time of St. Paul's execution, in the reign of Nero, under whom he shortly afterwards was crucified (with his head downwards, at his own request) about the year 65.

These letters, written when he was an old man (2 Peter i. 14), and in expectation of soon entering upon his reward, are full of deep feeling, and consolatory application of the great doctrines of the Gospel. Writing to the converts scattered through the countries in Asia Minor, named by him as "strangers" living among idolators, he exhorts them to consider themselves only as sojourners upon earth, and to fix their hopes upon another world, amidst the toils and conflicts to which they were exposed.

The First Epistle is described as having been written from Babylon (1 Peter v. 13); but it has been doubted whether the famous city on the Euphrates is meant, or another in Egypt, or whether the Apostle used the term figuratively either of Jerusalem or Rome. Most commentators, however, incline to the opinion that Rome was the place from whence the Epistle was written. It begins with thanksgiving for the blessings of the Gospel dispensation, as foretold by the prophets, and with an exhortation to holiness and brotherly love among those redeemed by the precious blood of Christ (chap. i.). St. Peter then recommends the exercise of meekness, self-government and obedience to magistrates; declares the duties of servants, husbands and wives; exhorts to the practice of compassion, courtesy and watchfulness (chap. ii., iii.); and, by the consideration of the last judgment, he exhorts all to cease from sin by the example of Christ, and to endure suffering with gladness for His sake (chap. iv.); concluding with an exhortation to the elders to feed the flock of God, and to all the believers to exercise vigilance and humility.

The Second Epistle was dictated no long time after the first, by a consciousness of his approaching end (chap. i. 10—15), and an anxiety that his converts should be guided by his parting words. He therefore exhorts them to be diligent in every good work, and to faithful confidence in the testimony of Scripture (chap. i.), especially in the times then approaching of heresy and unbelief (chap. ii.). By reminding them of the coming of Christ to judgment, he enforces the teaching which he and St. Paul had given them, and exhorts them to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Saviour (chap. iii.).

The same motives for a holy conversation, and for steadfast adherence to the truths we have received, still remain; for *we* also are looking for the judgment of the great day, and for the crown of glory then to be given to the faithful ones. Let us, too, hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.

The Three Epistles of St. John.

It is characteristic of the beloved disciple, who avoids the mention of himself by name in the Gospel which he wrote, to follow the same course in his Epistles. All of them, however, breathe so much of the same spirit, and are so much in the same style as the Gospel of St. John, that were external proof wanting (which is not the case) these would be sufficient evidence of their authenticity, although they do not bear his name.

Much uncertainty exists, however, as to the time when they were written, and the persons to whom they were addressed. From an allusion in 1 John ii. 18, it is supposed that the first Epistle was written shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, and A.D. 69 is the date generally ascribed to it; the two others are supposed to have been composed about the same time.

The *first* Epistle seems to be an exhortation to believers in general, warning them against the erroneous doctrines which were then beginning to make their appearance in the Churches, respecting the nature and person of Christ, afterwards more boldly taught by the Gnostics and others. Speaking from his personal knowledge of the Lord, he declares that if we walk in the light of the Gospel the blood of Christ will cleanse us from all unrighteousness. He condemns those who deny their sinfulness, and recommends a penitent acknowledgment of transgression; declares the universality of Christ's propitiation, and that the knowledge of God consists in obedience to His will, and condemns the love of the world (chap. i. ii.). He then warns believers against false teaching as to the pre-existence of Christ and His incarnation; exhorts them to abide in Him as their only safety; sets forth the wondrous love of God, and shows how His children may be distinguished (chap. iii.), and how false teachers may be detected; sets forth the excellence of brotherly love (chap. iv.); inculcates the necessity of gaining a victory over the world; the readiness of God to hear our prayers, to secure us against deadly sin; and, in stating the distinction between believers and the world, cautions them against idolatry (chap. v.).

The *Second* Epistle consists only of thirteen verses, addressed by him, as "the Elder," to some lady of rank and piety, who is not named, to encourage her to persevere in the truth and love of God, and to exhort her to beware of those false teachers who asserted that Christ was not a real man, and did not suffer as such, except in appearance. He denounces such notions as destructive of the Atonement, and forbids any encouragement being given to them; exhorting the faithful to obedience to God's commandments, and to exercise mutual love among themselves.

The *Third* Epistle, consisting of fourteen verses, is addressed by "the Elder" to Gaius or Caius, but as several of that name are mentioned in Scripture, it is not possible to ascertain which is intended. It appears that he was a man of wealth, piety, and hospitality, whose kindness to some Christian brethren, as they passed through the place in which he resided, is specially commended. The Apostle encourages him, also, to forward the missions of the brethren among the Gentiles, and reproves the ambition of Diotrephes, but commends the unblameable conduct of Demetrius, of neither of whom anything further is known. At least, we may learn to avoid the error of the one, and to imitate the other: following the spirit of all these Epistles, in which it is shown that the practical effects of the love of God within us is to excite us to love all those around us.

The Epistle of St. Jude.

The last of the Seven General Epistles is the brief letter of St. Jude, of whom little is known, except that he was one of the Apostles, the brother of James the less, and (as the son of Cleophas) related to our Lord. He is named in the list of the Apostles; once in regard to an enquiry he made of our Lord (John xiv. 21, 22), and again in Acts xv. 22 as proceeding to Antioch. Of his after labours, or of his end, all that is stated by early writers is conjectural.

The period when this Epistle was written seems, by its nature, to be the same as that of the Second Epistle of St. Peter, which it greatly resembles in many particulars, and evidently refers to the same heresies which were then spreading—especially those of the impure Gnostics, Nicolaitans, and followers of Simon Magus. These had been already referred to in 2 Peter ii., and in St. Paul's Epistles to Timothy, and were subsequently spoken of by St. John, Rev. ii. 6, 15; see also Acts viii. 9—24.

After saluting the Christians as "them that are sanctified," and praying for Divine blessings upon them, he exhorts them earnestly to contend for the pure faith of Christ, in opposition to the false doctrines then being taught. He enforces this appeal by citing God's dealings with the apostate angels and unrighteous men of old, and denounces the impious and profligate seducers of the faithful, who pretended to trust in the Divine mercy while leading an ungodly life, and tried to persuade the faithful to follow their evil example. Yet he warns them not to rail against their adversaries, reminding them, it is supposed, of a tradition preserved and well known among the Jews, of the conduct of Michael the archangel (verse 9), and of a prediction by Enoch, perhaps also traditionally handed down, that the great Judge would come, attended by a multitude of His people to execute His own sentence upon the wicked (verse 14). While, therefore, the first duty of the Christians was to be watchful against that day, to keep themselves free from the vices of these impure teachers, and to preserve themselves in the true faith and love of God, he exhorts them also to endeavour to recover others from the error of their ways, by showing kindness and compassion to those whose simplicity had caused them to fall into the snares set for them by wicked men; but in the case of more stubborn and hardened offenders, by setting before them the terribleness of God's wrath, and thus to save them "as brands plucked from the fire" (verse 23). With an impressive doxology, teaching them to look to God both to keep them from falling in this life, and to preserve them so as to become partakers of His glory in the world to come, he concludes his address, which is full of instruction for ourselves; for it teaches us that it is not sufficient to be nominal Christians—that we must expect to meet with opposition, be able to defend ourselves against our adversaries, and as champions "fight the good fight of faith;"—but that, lest we should deceive ourselves by mere profession, we must remember that a holy life is the sure fruit of a true faith, and that where it is a living one, we are continually growing, being built up in our most holy faith, by praying in the Holy Ghost (verse 20).

Is this our own happy experience?

The Revelation of John the Divine.

This closing book of the Sacred Scriptures is of a much later date than all the preceding ones. John survived all the other Apostles, and having been banished in the latter part of the reign of Domitian to the Isle of Patmos, returned to Ephesus after the death of the Emperor in A.D. 96. While in that dreary Island of the Ægean sea, he tells us he received the wondrous visions as to what shall be hereafter, which he recorded in this book. The New Testament needed only such a Revelation as this to make it complete. By the sure word of prophecy the Ancient Church was guided and comforted during the ages preceding the advent of Messiah: and now His Church is enabled to look forward, by the same sure word of prophecy, to the end of all things, when the glorified Saviour shall come again to complete His great work by the resurrection and the final judgment of the world.

With great reverence and humility we should read such a book as this: for God gave the prophecies not to gratify our curiosity by enabling us to foreknow things, but, after they are fulfilled, to show us that future events had been predicted by Him whose providence ruleth over all. "God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain."

St. John, at the outset, asserts the Divine authority of the predictions he has here recorded, and describes the vision in which he is commanded to write them (chap. i.). The Epistles to the seven Churches of Asia, containing an account of their then state and future condition as since fulfilled, are contained in chap ii., iii., which warn us, also, to avoid their errors and their fate. The prophetic vision commences at the fourth chapter and continues to the end of the book, predicting all the most remarkable events in the Christian Church, from the time of the Apostle to the final consummation of all things (iv—xxii.). After beholding the Divine glory, and the sealed Book only to be opened by the Lamb, St. John sees the seven seals broken, and hears the seven trumpets sounded by seven angels. The appearance of the two witnesses, and a great and terrible conflict between the powers of light and darkness, are followed by the pouring out of the seven vials,—the whole vision terminating with a description of the great day when Christ shall come to reveal the New Jerusalem full of divine light and glory.

Mingled with passages which are yet obscure, because as yet unfulfilled, there are descriptions of the Saviour,—His love, His atonement, and His glory (chap. v., xiv.) of heaven and the happiness of the redeemed (chap. xxi., xxii.) and of the destruction of the wicked (chap. xix., xx.) which we can all profit by and understand. The hymns offered up to God and Christ (chap. iv. 8—11; v. 9—13; vii. 12; xv. 3, 4); the confession of one supreme God only (chap ix. 20; xiv. 7; xxi. 8; xxii. 15); the acknowledgment of Christ as the only Saviour and source of sanctification (chap. v. 9; vii. 14; xii. 11; xiii. 18); the duty of patient expectation and waiting for Christ's coming, amidst persecution and suffering, (chap. xiii. 10; xiv. 12, 13; xvi. 15) are all of present help and comfort to us.

Let us endeavour, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, so to direct our thoughts and actions as the people of Christ, that we may be of the number of those "who love His appearing" (2 Tim. iv. 8). So may we join the beloved Apostle in his concluding prayer—"Amen. Even so come Lord Jesus."

Plans and Intelligence.

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

No. VIII.

In compliance with the request of the Editors of this Magazine, I have endeavoured to give a short sketch of the formation, plans, and proceedings of *our* Sunday school; not because I am so satisfied with its efficiency that I would hold it up as a model to others (for none know better than I its many defects, or mourn more deeply over its shortcomings and inefficiency), but because it has some distinctive features, which may suggest alterations and improvements in others;—for, even as "iron sharpeneth iron," so I am convinced that nothing tends to the improvement of our Sunday schools more than the interchange of plans and experiences between those fellow-labourers, whose hearts' desire it is to see our Sunday schools the true spiritual folds of Christ and the nurseries of our Church.

Our Sunday school dates back its origin to more than a quarter of a century, during the whole of which period my connection with it has been uninterrupted, and the very many valued friendships which I have formed through it, both amongst teachers and scholars, have endeared it to me by a thousand ties, which a lifetime will fail to sever, but which I humbly trust to be permitted to renew with redoubled joy throughout the endless ages of eternity.

Before the institution of our Sunday school there was only a District National School, to which the children of our district and those of an adjoining one were jointly admitted, for the rectors of those days were well content with things as they were. About that time a new curate came to our Church, who, seeing the large number of children in the immediate neighbourhood, who were wholly destitute of spiritual instruction, obtained permission of the rector to open our Sunday school, and invited such of the members of the congregation as were willing to assist him in the work to meet him on a given evening in the vestry of the Church to make arrangements.

At the appointed time about twenty volunteers presented themselves, and, after an appropriate prayer, it was resolved to commence a school on the following Sunday, which we were permitted to hold in the Church, there being no room obtainable in the district which would answer the purpose. The services of a gentleman (a school-

master) were obtained for the superintendence, at the salary of £10 per annum, and a supply of Bibles, Testaments, School Primers, and Hymn Books having been procured, we commenced our school with about one hundred scholars of all ages from six to ten or twelve, who, after examination, were allotted amongst the teachers present, in classes of six or eight each.

Thus we continued for about a year, by the end of which time our curate had succeeded in establishing an infant school, for which the first floors of two houses had been thrown into one, and thither our Sunday school removed; but the rooms were very small, and the fixed galleries for the infants greatly lessened the accommodation. Still it had its advantages, as holding the school in Church tended very much to lessen the children's reverence for the sacred edifice; and the Church service following the school almost without a break, caused it to become a weariness to the younger children, much more than it would have done if they had had a walk from school to church.

Our school continued thus for above two years, until the gentleman who acted as superintendent relinquished the office, when our present superintendent undertook it *free of all charge*, and has continued to fulfil the duties most zealously to the present time.

Some years after this, our Infant school was removed into smaller premises for a short time, pending the preparation of more convenient premises, and our Sunday school was again removed to the Church. During this period, our rector's daughter, who had the charge of the infant class in the Sunday school, deemed it preferable to remove it from the rest of the school, and assembled it in its own school-room under the charge of its usual week-day teachers, she herself taking the entire superintendence of it. From this time, the infants (that is, all under seven years of age) have always been kept separate from the elder scholars attending our Sunday school, and have been under the usual form of instruction adopted on the week-day, but chiefly conducted by voluntary lady teachers, under distinct superintendence; and for my own part, I must say, that I have never once regretted the alteration, but strongly recommend the plan to other schools, for not only are the infants more suitably taught in a separate room, where there is no fear of interrupting other classes by allowing them to rise and sit, sing a hymn, or repeat simultaneously, so as to make the teaching less monotonous and irksome, but the other scholars are retained in the school to a much more advanced age; where there are no little ones admitted, the school generally is more quiet, and the general address at the close of school more easily adapted to the capacities of all present.

During this period, the younger children of our Sunday school were assembled at the School house on Sunday mornings during the Church service, where a separate and more appropriate service was held for them, conducted by the superintendent, assisted in keeping order by some of the teachers; and however much may be said (and justly too), *against* such separate services, I must say, that I feel assured that the children not only liked ours, and profited by them considerably, but that they were greatly conducive to fostering in their minds both love and reverence for our beautiful Church service. Thus, only the elder scholars, who were able to take part in, and understand the Church service, were permitted to attend it, and in case any of them misconducted themselves, they were kept back for some few Sundays at the School service; by this means attendance at Church came to be looked upon as a privilege, and was at once appreciated accordingly, and we had very few complaints about misconduct; whilst those younger ones who attended the School service, were taught to use their prayer books, and join in the service which was taken entirely from the morning service in the Liturgy. This separate service was discontinued at the wish of one of our ministers, and has not since been resumed.

After a period of many years, an excellent National school was established in our district, and was soon crowded. The committee then endeavoured to amalgamate the Sunday school with the National school, by requiring the attendance of all the scholars on the Sunday to be placed under the control of the National School master and mistress. This the teachers in the Sunday school naturally objected to, as it would soon have resulted in most of the elder scholars leaving the school. The Committee then resolved, that the two schools should be carried on separately and distinctly, those who attended the National school being required to attend also on the Sunday, and being taught by a staff of voluntary teachers, under the superintendence of their master and mistress.

Our Sunday school is, therefore, necessarily small, numbering only about 150 scholars, but more than one-third of these are elder scholars, about fifty of them being over sixteen years of age, and having been confirmed whilst attending the school; the others are mostly in situations, or attend private schools in the neighbourhood.

We meet in a large room at the basement of the school building, and although we have lost our dear old rector, whose chief desire it was to please every one, we have another who has in all things shewn himself equally kind and courteous to all; and, while in no way interfering with the conduct of the school, is at all times, and in all things ready to give his countenance and support to every plan that is proposed with a view to the benefit of his flock.

The teachers in our Sunday school are most exemplary, some of hose who are there now, having been present on the day the school ras opened, and have continued in it ever since; many remained ith us ten or twelve years, and on the whole, I should think that ur school has had as few changes in its teachers as any school in ondon. The teachers of our senior classes are all persons of educa- ion and position, and their influence with their scholars is very reat. Up to within the last three or four years, we have always ad a good supply of such teachers, but about three years since, we st our Bible Class teacher, (who for very many years had filled ie office most efficiently, and whose loss I fear we shall never be ble to supply,) and the teachers of the first and second classes in ie Girls' school, who most ungraciously took it into their heads to et married, and go to live at a distance; we also lost the Boy's Bible lass teacher, and for a lack of an efficient successor, our superin- ndent himself takes the Bible Class. Our lack of teachers is at resent entirely supplied by the Bible Classes; six from the young en's, and six from the young women's classes teach once in the day, id attend the class as usual during the other service; thus, three on ch side are engaged in teaching in the morning, and in the after- on they resume their place in the Bible Classes, and three others i each side take the same classes in the afternoon. By this means e are training up a staff of very efficient teachers, and at the same me, by providing our elder scholars with some interesting and pro- table occupation, we retain our influence over them, and keep them nder instruction, until long after the period when young people sually leave even a Sunday school.

Three middle classes on each side are allotted to the senior holars, as these are usually the most tractable, and more easy to ach, the elder and younger classes being taught by the older achers. The younger children are required to pay the same spect to the senior scholars, as teachers, as to any of the others. y such rules, the tone of our senior scholars' Bible classes, though eeting in the school, is fully maintained.

Our school and Bible classes all meet in the same room, without ny partitions, and sometimes when the teacher of our young omen's Bible class is out of town, our superintendent unites the wo Bible classes into one, and teaches them together; and yet luring the years our school has been at work, we have never had nuch cause to complain of undue familiarity or impropriety of con- luct between the boys and girls; indeed, I am of opinion, that min- gling them together in school, under the supervision of the teachers, ends much to establish a right feeling, and mutual respect between

them. Another advantage of having the Bible classes in the same room with the other scholars is, that the younger scholars having the elder ones constantly before them, not only are made more orderly, but come to look upon the Bible class as the goal to which they hope to arrive, and consequently they continue their attendance at the school so long as they are able, or until quite grown up, none ever being able to consider themselves "too old for school," whilst they see so many their seniors in regular attendance. Indeed we scarcely ever lose a scholar, except from unavoidable causes, and I should think the *average* number of years of the attendance of all our scholars is at least FIVE, that of very many amounting to fifteen.

In neither of our Bible classes, which contain respectively fifteen and sixteen scholars, have we any under eighteen years of age, and those attending the first classes in the boy's, and the first and second in the girls' schools, have almost all been confirmed.

We separate our school into three divisions, Bible, Testament, and Elementary, and though of late years we have more that could not read, still in the youngest classes on each side, we adopt the Institute's reading books, and find them very suitable; in the other classes we have an Old Testament Lesson in the morning, following out the Institute's course, and varying according to the progress the class has made; and in the afternoon, a Gospel lesson throughout the school. In the Bible classes, the Gospel lesson is taken in the morning, (so that those who teach it in the afternoon, will have had the benefit of hearing it taught in the morning,) and some advanced lesson in the afternoon when the attendance is larger.

Twice in each year, at Midsummer and at Christmas, our scholars are promoted from class to class, as they may deserve, and as it may be found necessary to keep the classes as nearly as possible equal in point of numbers, and uniform as to the capabilities of the scholars, though we seldom have occasion to remove very many on this account.

We have adopted the plan of appointing the most regular scholar in each class as the monitor to the class, whose duty it is to assist in keeping order, when the teacher is not present, to take charge of the Bibles, &c., lent for use in the class, and generally to report to the teacher or superintendent any misconduct, and on the whole, I am inclined to think the plan a good one; an occasional tea, or some other little privilege is needed to stimulate the monitors to perseverance.

We have a good library belonging to our school, which the children have free access to on the recommendation of their teachers;

ze books are well selected, care being taken to provide such
s will both interest and benefit the elder scholars, not exclusively
·ligious, but good moral tales, travels, historical tales, &c., &c., such
; young men and women will read to the exclusion of the many
ise publications of the present day.

Each scholar is provided with a library ticket with ruled spaces,
which to fill in the numbers of the books which he wishes to read,
id this he gives up on the Sunday morning with his book; between
e morning service and afternoon school, the librarian changes the
)oks, marking through on the back of the card the number of each
)ok as it is given, and the books are delivered to the monitors of
:h class in the afternoon. This plan is found to answer much
:tter than that of changing the books on a week-day evening.

We have an annual treat for our scholars, which is looked forward
by most of them as the grand gala day of the year. We assemble
)out seven in the morning, and we generally find that even the
test comers on the Sunday, who find half-past nine too early for
em, can get in time on these occasions. We always begin our
ıy with prayer and thanksgiving, and during the many years we
ıve had these treats, we have never but once had an unfavourable
ıy, and I think it is because we have always asked God's blessing
)on it. Next we send round the collecting box for the scholars'
)ntributions towards the missionary work, or the sick poor in the
strict, for inasmuch as the provisions are on the most liberal
ale, and the whole expense is defrayed by the voluntary contribu-
ons and the collections made by the teachers, and the scholars
ways seem to have plenty of spare cash on such occasions, we deem
an excellent opportunity of teaching them to "look not every
an on his own things, but on the things of others also," and as
ıey have freely received, so they should freely give to those who
re not so richly blessed. For the last two years the sum collected
n these occasions, amounted to thirty shillings each day, which
as sent last year to Lancashire, and this year was distributed to
welve poor sick people in our own district. We usually obtain a
pacious field near to a station on the line of railway nearest to our
·hool, and what with currant rolls for breakfast, meat pies, and jam
arts for dinner, fruit for dessert, cake and "solid" milk (as one of
nine called it) for the juniors, and tea for the elders, together with
wings, rides, and games of all sorts, the day usually passes most
ıappily, and we return to town by nine o'clock. Our rule is to
nake up our list for the annual treat, a month or six weeks before
t takes place, and no children who enter the school after that time
ıre permitted to join it.

We have once a year a tea party for the parents of our scholars, to which both fathers and mothers are invited, when we provide them with a sumptuous tea, after which, for about an hour, we have suitable addresses, and conclude the whole with dissolving views, or some other entertainment, the intervals being enlivened by a piano; and on dismissing them, a new year's address, or other little book is presented to each as a memento. We believe that these meetings are calculated to be very beneficial, not only to the school, but to the parents also, some of whom have acknowledged the spiritual benefit which has resulted to them from what they have heard there, and which has in more than one instance been evidenced by a change of life.

Once a year we have a public examination, not a competitive one, nor yet with any idea of making a display of the more forward children, but inasmuch as we acknowledge that we, as teachers, are responsible to the parents of our scholars for what we teach them, we invite them once a year to hear the scholars examined upon that which has formed the course of instruction in each division during the year. Formerly we held these examinations on a week evening, but of late years we have held them on a Sunday afternoon, as being more convenient for the parents, of whom we have always obtained a very good attendance. There is a great deal in the parents being familiar with the inside of the school room, and I believe that these examinations have the effect of making them take more interest in their children's lessons, in the school generally, and in making them better acquainted with the teachers.

After the examination, a new year's address is given to each child, and the annual prizes are distributed, these latter are given either for punctual and regular attendance throughout the year, or for having obtained a certain number of marks for lessons and general good conduct. We fix a certain standard, and every child who attains to that number of marks, is entitled to a prize, differing in value according to his class in the school; by this means it is open to every scholar to obtain a prize, and one getting it in no way militates against his companion getting it likewise, so that all unholy rivalry is avoided, whilst sufficient stimulus to good conduct remains. Of course our standard is tolerably high; thus each scholar ought to get five marks each Sunday, and to obtain a prize, they must *exceed* two hundred in the year—only fifty Sundays counting.

In our Bible classes we give no marks, but only keep a record of their attendance, and at the end of the year some nice book is presented by the rector to each one who has attended regularly.

Once a year we have a gathering of old and senior scholars, to

ich all who have left the school after having been confirmed are ited, together with their former teachers, and also all the senior olars in the school who have been confirmed. We are usually bled to send out about one hundred invitations to those who e left the school and are in service, or married, or living too far ay; and those whom we are not able to find know that they have general standing invitation to our annual tea party, which is ays held on the same evening (Easter Tuesday) in each year, l we usually assemble from eighty to one hundred, one half of om are still in the school, the others being old scholars.

We meet at six o'clock to a sumptuous tea, after which time is owed for general conversation and inspection of objects of erest, which are borrowed for the occasion, and for singing and sic; after which a few suitable addresses are given by the rector, perintendent, and old or present teachers, and at about ten o'clock y are dismissed with the present of a small book as a remem- ance; and I know well that this, our Senior Scholars' Tea Party, very much liked by all, and tends to keep alive the connection ween the old scholars and the school; it also results in the urn of those who, having left from some cause, are afterwards in position to resume their attendance. In connection with this ior scholars' meeting we have also a Sacramental service on ster Sunday evening, the invitation to both going out in the same ter, and we usually muster about forty late and present scholars the Lord's table on this occasion; and I think that the good ect of this reminder of the duty and privilege of partaking of the rd's Supper, even to those who may not at the time avail them- ves of it, and the benefit of recalling to their minds those things ich they learnt amongst us in years past, cannot be over imated. On the anniversary Sunday of our school we also invite many of our elder scholars as are willing to join the teachers at e Lord's table, and we usually have a goodly number, although we e careful never to use any mere personal influence to induce them attend.

We have a missionary box placed at the entrance door of our hool to receive the contributions of the scholars, and we have a sionary address from the desk on the first Sunday in each nth; but we strive rather to induce them "to give themselves to e Lord" first, and to become living missionaries in their appointed here of daily duty, than merely to give their money as a work of nevolence, fully convinced that if we succeed in winning them for rist, His love will constrain them to do the rest; so that our lections are but small, not amounting to £5 in the year in the

missionary box; but then, such as it is, it is freely given, and we trust from a right motive, as no eye but God's sees the gift. Our subscriptions last winter for Lancashire amounted to thirty shillings each Sunday, but this was a "special appeal."

We have, also, a week evening class for our elder scholars, at which writing, arithmetic, book-keeping and such like subjects are taught. They have, also, formed a mutual improvement class amongst themselves under the presidency of our Superintendent, at which they read papers on various subjects which are afterwards discussed. In the summer months this class resolves itself into a Cricket club, and the friendly intercourse by these means fostered amongst them and their teacher tends very materially to confirm his influence over them, and to keep the class together.

I have thus given a very imperfect sketch of our Sunday school and its operations, and it will, doubtless, be expected that a school which has been in operation during so many years should have some results to show. As to our teachers, three of those who were formerly in our school, are now in the ministry; and many have formed connections there which have resulted in (I think I may say) very happy and suitable unions for life. Of our scholars, two of my first boys are now doing well in Australia, and are in constant communication with me, remitting me periodical sums for the use of their aged parents, whom they entirely support: they are now active members of a Committee for the erection of a new Church in Kangaroo diggings, and the one superintends and the other teaches in the Sunday school which they have themselves started. Several other of our late senior scholars are teaching in other Sunday schools, two of my present scholars have the charge of Ragged schools, and many others are employed in them. Some have married from the school, and are happily settled, and some we have laid in the grave "in sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ." And in temporal matters, too, many both teachers and scholars have good cause to trace their rise in the world to their connection with our Sunday school. I am sure that if those who think the Sunday school no longer necessary, or at the best a necessary evil, could but estimate the temporal and spiritual benefits conferred upon teachers, scholars, and their families by its agency, they would rank it, as it deserves, amongst the noblest institutions of our country.

A Teacher

SUNDAY COLLEGES FOR ELDER SCHOLARS.

The defection of elder scholars is felt by all, especially by those ociated with their studies, who from their connection have med an almost parental attachment to many.

The subject is of the greatest possible importance, and any plans improvement will affect, probably, not the attendants of the ool only, but all classes and ranks of our members.

What are the influences which chiefly prevail amongst them? A , we know, are found occupied in the Sunday School as junior chers, but the teaching is of a limited character. The time of these is nt almost wholly with the very young, for so long a period as to e but little attraction, and to weaken and dishearten many. ere there a general plan for their suitable employment, there is r reason to suppose it would induce many more to become can- lates and sharers in the work; but it is not intended here to enter on any proposed changes for retaining the scholars as teachers in school.

With the bulk of this class, one of the first emotions felt by the iring scholar is that of

1st.—Pride. His daily avocations have changed, he has been unched into society amongst seniors, and a distaste for the school natural, his recollections of which impress him painfully with the ling that he is there regarded and treated as a schoolboy.

2nd.—Resentment. That feeling of pride which repels him from e precincts of the school (which, as it is natural, cannot be censured) tracts him to the company of elder members of society, but to the ciety of the elders of the Church he finds little access, and it is one the first wants of our Church to provide the means of admitting him to closer communion with the congregation. At present, our organi- tion has few arrangements of such a character, but for other asons such association is desirable. Our young alumni ought to known to their elder brethren; the services of those who assist teachers ought to be recognised, and at least a general acquaint- ice ought to be initiated amongst all members of the same church parish. The neglect of this, and the distance at which all the unger branches find themselves kept from their seniors raises, I lieve,—and not unnaturally—some feeling of resentment which nds to throw them off, and isolate them from the very Church ey have been connected with, and without any effort on the part f the congregation to retain them.

The members of every congregation should meet together in some

stated manner, out of the Church, as well as during worship, in order to promote a social acquaintance and feeling now so seldom seen amongst members of the Church of England. Examples of this, under the title of Church Unions, have happily been established, and will, it is hoped, be extended.

3rd.—Enquiries made on the present subject have dwelt chiefly on the temptations which beset the young, as if their defection from the School or the Church was the result of vicious inclinations induced by the blandishments and temptations which prevail in the world. I believe that these conclusions are far too sweeping, and are ungenerous. It is, however, needless for me to dwell on this important part of the subject, which is sure to receive, as it has already done, the consideration of all who sympathise in the work. I proceed to enlarge on what I believe to be the great want to be supplied.

The period of the boy's leaving his Sunday class (I use the masculine gender for brevity's sake), is the period when, as labourer or apprentice, he enters upon the course of life which is to determine his future position in society and in the world. What a new and extended view then breaks upon him! his means of support depend on his own labours; his future rank, his home and family, his duties as a citizen, all fill his thoughts and stir his mind with hopes and anxieties that may be pardoned if they should engross and absorb, for a time, his whole attention.

At such a time, what are the reflections entertained by the youth on his Sunday school connections? He finds that his teaching has provided him with no direct helps for his advancement; to a certain extent he has been disappointed, the importance assigned to his religious duties, as those which would most effect his life, he finds to have no immediate, or at least appreciable effect on his new position, and the re-action tells on him unfavourably; he even imagines that his plans and aspirations, now so changed, yet so important, will find no sympathy in the Sunday school—they may possibly meet with some rebuke. Hence the seed of distrust is sown; and, without having any explanation, a coolness and distance springs up, till the youth is lost sight of, and his future career lies beyond the influence of his former associations.

Believing that the retiring scholars are still willing to appropriate their time on Sundays in the same direction as before, if under different auspices and a higher association, I propose that the system of Sunday school teaching should be expanded, and assume an additional and higher development in the form of a

SUNDAY COLLEGE.

So numerous are the appliances of the present Church schools nd institutions, and so abundant the services of educated men for ccasional work of the highest character, that I believe the staff nd organisation of such an institution could be gathered and rmed into shape in a very summary way. The exact framework f it, or its variety of objects, could not be accurately defined before- and. Time would certainly work changes of no light character in s proceedings. An invitation might be put forth to arrange a mmittee for action. The plan would comprise within its range Sunday school to mark the great basis of its operations, and to stinguish those classes whose interests it is which the college has heart. Classes for higher instruction to the students will be rmed; lectures and addresses by dignitaries and leading minds be livered; and though strict Sunday instruction will be observed t that day, and therefore the secular learning taught by other ndred associations can only be glanced at and commended, yet e whole could be so associated in mind and in act as to satisfy e earnest youth bent on self-improvement and self-advancement, at the interests of the scholar, whilst passing through the Sun- y school, and afterwards whilst a student in the college as a rker in any of the affairs of the Church, were throughout the jects and the care of his teachers up to the time of his settlement life. W. R.

[OTE.—The after life of our senior scholars is such an important and anxious question to us all, that any suggestion which may lead to any plan being devised, whereby we could be assured that they would become active and recognised members of the Church in which they have been reared, must be welcome to Sunday school teachers. The proposal contained in the preceding paper is so vague, however, that it is not possible to estimate whether such a plan as that indicated would be feasible in practice; but we have been induced to insert it, as the topic to which it refers is a most important one, in the hope that others might be able to suggest some mode by which our senior scholars, on leaving our Bible classes, could take their place among the members of the Church, and still continue to gather knowledge and experience in the ways of godliness.—EDITORS.]

TEACHERS' PRAYER UNION.

"Continuing instant in prayer" is so obviously the duty of those ho are engaged in the work of the Lord, and is so especially the urce of their strength, and the main-spring of their success, that e again invite our fellow-labourers to unite together before the hrone of Grace, from week to week, and subjoin a list of special ubjects for their prayers.

Oct. 6th.—*For the aid of the Holy Spirit*, as the Teacher and Intercessor for all engaged in Sunday-school work.

Oct. 13th.—*For all Sunday-school Teachers*, especially that they may themselves be taught of God, and that they may successfully make known the Saviour to the young.

Oct. 20th.—*For the Church of England*, that it may continue to be the repository of God's truth, and the channel for making it known to all the people of this land.

Oct. 27th.—*For the Sunday-school Institute*, that it may be blessed by God, and made instrumental in extending the kingdom of Christ among the young.

Nov. 3rd.—*For all Superintendents*, and especially that they may know how to rule in wisdom and love.

Nov. 10th.—*For all Sunday Scholars*, and especially that they may receive with meekness the engrafted Word to the salvation of their souls.

Nov. 17th.—*For all Ministers of the Gospel*, that they may faithfully preach Christ and Him crucified, and declare His grace to all.

Nov. 24th.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, and especially that its publications may be kept free from error, and be blessed in promoting the efficiency of Teachers.

Dec. 1st.—*For the Parents and Friends of our Sunday Scholars*, that they may know and value the truths taught to their children in our Schools.

Dec. 8th.—*For all Scholars who have passed into the World*, that they may continue in the things which they have learned, and abide in the fear and love of God.

Dec. 15th.—*For the Due Observance of the Sabbath*, and especially that men may learn to feel their chief pleasure in consecrating it to God's service.

Dec. 22nd.—*For our Sovereign and the Royal Family*, that God may bless them in their own souls, and make them a blessing to this nation.

Dec. 29th.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, and especially that its Committee and Officers, and all its Members, may labour with a single desire to promote the glory of God.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN RUSSIA.

In *MacMillan's Magazine* for September, is a very interesting Paper bearing the title of "the Russian Sunday School movement in 1860—2, by a Russian Patriot," describing very graphically the endeavours of many earnest men in that country to prove practically their love for the lower classes, by taking into their own hands the education of the people. The extracts which we give from the paper will show the nature and results of their past efforts: and it may interest our readers to know that in the autumn of 1861, the Church of England Sunday School Institute was applied to for help in behalf of some English Sunday Schools then about to be established by some ladies in St. Petersburg, and that the Society made a grant of such of its publications as they required for the purpose.

The article above referred to, states that—

The Sunday School movement
n in the summer of 1860. If I
ke not, the first example was given
e University of Kiew; but not more
a fortnight later the first Sunday
l was opened also in St. Peters-
Here the honour of the beginning
s to military men—staff-officers
gineers. The building used for
st school was a military barrack
ing to military telegraphists.
aders of the movement asked the
zation of Government for open-
unday School, and using for this
the Government building. . .
ome wavering, consent was re-
y given, and the first school in
rsburgh opened in the barracks
legraphists. . . . . Schools began
g up in every part of the town:
months had not passed after
nning of the movement when
sburg could boast of twenty-
nday Schools. Generally, the
of a Sunday School took place
lowing manner:—Private gen-
terested in the subject, formed
tee, collected money, and sent
tion to the chief of some Go-
building suitable for the
d not used during Sundays,
ve to place the Sunday School
me schools found room in bar-
ic in military schools. Two
opened by the student-officers
and artillery academies. A
found room in private dwell-
e committee of the school
opened in the suburbs of
rg, the most industrial part
burgh, applied to the owners
ctory of the neighbourhood
in which to establish the
these gentlemen most gene-
ected money and took a
use for the purpose.
m in which to establish the
g been found, the managing
ought the necessary books
aterials, and invited teach-
ers were easily found. The whole youth of the middle classes of St. Petersburgh volunteered their services. Students of the university and of the school of law, with artillery, engineer, and staff-officers, private gentlemen, and a great number of ladies, came forward, happy to be useful to their fellow-creatures. . . . . The Sunday Schools helped to discover many and many a true Christian priest, who devoted his labour to the teaching of the children, and whose influence was beneficially felt in the school committees. The ladies who undertook to teach in the schools also belonged to the middle classes—chiefly wives and daughters of scientific men, of officers, and of country squires spending the winter in St. Petersburgh.

"The number of teachers was more than sufficient, and some schools were even obliged to refuse offers. On the average every school had more than forty teachers, and the total number of them in St. Petersburgh was more than 1,000. This great number of teachers allowed the use of a particular method of teaching, which cannot be used in common schools. A school of, let us say, 200 boys or girls had forty teachers, every one of whom took round him a group of five pupils. . . . . .

"The teaching in the Sunday Schools embraced reading and writing, conducted together; arithmetic, taught as much as possible in examples taken from everyday life; a little geography; national history; and, in some schools, the rudiments of natural philosophy. Some schools were happy enough to find volunteer teachers of drawing; but those were exceptions. Religion was taught in all the schools by priests who had offered their services. In the six girls' schools the same subjects were taught, by ladies and gentlemen together, the latter undertaking generally the teaching of arithmetic and natural philosophy.

"In the first period of the existence of the schools there was no community

between them. Each formed a whole, quite independent of the rest. But, by degrees, a certain community sprang up. The municipality of St. Petersburgh took a lively interest in the question, and delegated one of its secretaries to study it, and help the schools by grants of money and school materials. This secretary, a most able and honourable man, was the first link between the schools. Another means of union arose out of the creation of a Sunday School fund at the establishment of one of the most important booksellers of St. Petersburgh. This fund was raised by voluntary subscriptions. . . . . Another, and even more powerful, bond of union among the schools originated in one of the girls' schools, the committee of which invited delegates of all the other schools to take part in its meetings, and decide questions of common utility.

"The Sunday Schools—as, I believe, is clear from this sketch—were not, like the English ones, purely religious schools. They had a far more secular character, and were rather destined to help the general education of the people in its various branches, including religion, than to keep exclusively to this last.

"All the schools were crowded. Some, as the one in the suburb of Schlusselburg, had more than 500 pupils, mostly from the manufactories of the neighbourhood. Generally, the schools had from 100 to 200 pupils. The twenty-eight schools of St. Petersburgh had, in all, nearly 4,500 pupils. Generally these belonged to the lowest classes of the town-population; children of servants, apprentices in different workshops, formed the majority. Grown-up peasants and workmen were intermingled with these; and one would frequently see, at the same table, boys of ten and full-grown peasants, working diligently at some problem of arithmetic. The girls were, for the greatest part, apprentices in the numerous dressmakers' shops of St. Petersburgh. Daughters or servants of petty traders came also in great number; but generally the girls belonged to a class somewhat higher than the boys. In age, they varied between ten and eighteen.

"The attendance at the schools was pretty regular—at least in so far as it depended on the pupils. . .The teaching took very little time. The schools were opened at eleven, after Church Service, and at two the secular teaching was finished, and one hour more was taken up by the priest. At three the pupils left the school. Except the Sundays, all the great holidays of the Greek Church were used for school teaching. Christmas gave three days, Easter the same; so that the whole number of school days in the year was from seventy to eighty. . . . . .

"It was a general rule in all schools that the pupils should be treated with the greatest kindness. No punishment or compulsion was ever used. The pupils were free to come or absent themselves without any one asking the reason. In some schools, particularly with grown-up pupils, it was left to their own decision what they should study; and very often a man who was able to read and write came only to study drawing and arithmetic. The schools lent books to pupils who wished to read at home during the week, and the books were always carefully returned. It was a rule to address the pupils with "you," instead of "thou," the former locution being used in Russia between equals, and the last only towards inferiors. This friendly tone of the Sunday Schools was a great inducement for the pupils. It contrasted so agreeably with the coarseness of their every-day life—the teaching was so pleasant, so diversified, the relation on equal footing with civilized persons so attractive—that the schools were crowded. Friendship sprang up between pupils and teachers. One winter did much to destroy the prejudice created in the mind of the people by centuries.

"Hitherto I have only spoken of St. tersburgh. But the same movement nt on all over Russia. Moscow had nty schools; the other great towns h four or five. There was no town ch had not at least one school: and he beginning of 1861, the total ıber of Sunday Schools in all Russia, orted entirely by voluntary contri- ons, and with voluntary teachers, certainly not less than 300, with 00 pupils, and nearly 4,000 teachers. As the movement extended, the ty of the Government increased. bers of the imperial council de- ed it as a gigantic conspiracy to hrow imperial authority, to destroy on, property, family, all ties of y. . . The plan of those men was, ıe one hand, to influence the ror against the Sunday Schools, resenting them as revolutionary, ous, immoral; and, on the other to try, by unnecessary inter- with the school organization, gust society with the work so ıtly begun, and drive it, perhaps, e rash step.

ıe first step in this direction was n the winter of 1861, some months he beginning of the movement. Minister of Popular Education ıed a regulation for the Sunday . By it every school was sub- to a Government inspector. The g of history, geography, and philosophy was prohibited. . The teachers—generally steady ınderstood the aim of the Go- nt, and preferred to do half the ey intended, rather than to leave ely undone. The entreaties of ion of the teachers prevailed; school movement not only con- tinued, but even increased in St. Petersburgh. . . . . The year 1861-62 found the Sunday Schools strongly organized. The novelty was gone; but the schools were felt as one of the elements of town-life, a thing which had vitality in it. During the winter a whole popular school-literature sprang up; and a society for facilitating the circulation of new school-books, so as to bring them within reach of village-schools in the remotest provinces of the empire, was organized, and went actively to work. In St. Petersburg and Moscow reading-rooms for the people were opened, and were soon over-crowded by peasants, workmen, and small tradesmen.

"We have to relate now the end of this movement. . . . . The month of May, 1862, saw a great part of St. Petersburg in flames. The poorer parts of the town were consumed. At the first moment, when the flames broke out, the Government was terrified. . . . . It decided to improve the opportunity, and destroy with one blow the growing influence of the Liberal party. The Government took upon itself the dreadful responsibility of officially accusing the Liberals of having ordered the fire with the hope of bringing the people to a revolution. . . . . The Sunday Schools were not forgotten in this proscription of the Liberal party. When the popular feelings were sufficiently excited, a circular of the Government put an end to the existence of the Sunday Schools, and the popular reading-rooms, sweeping away with one stroke of the pen 300 schools, and nearly 25,000 pupils, and some twenty popular reading-rooms, and thus destroying in one minute the hard work of two years."

Sunday School Institute.

QUARTERLY RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

With but one exception, no meetings have been held at the Rooms of the Institute during the past Quarter:—that occasion was

THE DEVOTIONAL MEETING,

which was held on Monday Evening, the 13th of July, and was conducted by the Rev. E. Auriol, M.A.

The discontinuance of the usual gathering of members has been rendered necessary by the

ALTERATION OF PREMISES AND OTHER ARRANGEMENTS

consequent upon the approaching expiration of the Lease held by the Committee of the house occupied by the Society, at No. 41, Ludgate Hill. The expense which has been thus incurred, during nearly seven years past, in the hope of largely increasing the sale of the publications by possessing a shop in a chief public thoroughfare, has not been compensated by any corresponding extension of the sale of Magazines or school material; and, as an opportunity arose of assigning the Lease, the Committee determined (considering their financial position) not to renew it, hoping thus to diminish the working expenses of the Society without, as they trust, suffering any loss by a diminished circulation of its publications. They have, therefore, engaged a suite of rooms on the first floor of the *same house*, No. 41, Ludgate Hill, in which the Depository will still be kept for the supply of all the books and materials required by members, where the Library for their use will be open as heretofore, and where they will be able to assemble at intervals for Conversational Meetings or Training Classes as soon as the alterations, now in progress, are completed. The temporary suspension of business, and of the meetings of the members, under these circumstances, it will be seen was unavoidable.

TRAINING LESSONS.

The Rev. S. Thornton, Incumbent of St. Jude's, Whitechapel, having applied to the Committee for aid in establishing a "Sunday School Teachers' Training Class," in connection with the East London Church Association, they cheerfully complied with his request and Messrs. Norton, Reid, and Heald, have attended on consecutive Fridays, and given training lessons in the presence of a number of Sunday School Teachers. Other members of the Committee propose to assist in the same object during the months of October and November.

It is arranged that Mr. Reid shall (D.V.) deliver a training lesson in connection with the South London Auxiliary, on the 17th November, and Mr. Norton, on the 21st December.

The next

DEVOTIONAL MEETING

for the members will be held on Tuesday Evening, the 6th of October, at half-past seven o'clock, conducted (D.V.) by the Rev. E. Auriol, M.A.

A social Meeting for

SUPERINTENDENTS

will also be held at the Rooms of the Institute, on Thursday evening, the 8th of October, at seven o'clock.

DEPUTATIONS.

The Executive Committee of the Church Congress, proposed to be held in Manchester, on the 14th, 15th, and 16th of October, have invited Mr. Fleet, one of the Honorary Secretaries of the Institute, to take part in a discussion relative to the extension and

rovement of Sunday Schools. The ation has been accepted, and we to furnish, in our next number, a rt of this discussion, which pro- to be of much interest to our -workers.

reral arrangements for meetings in North and Midland counties are ogress of arrangement.

fore the next number of the Quar- is in the hands of our readers, will have an opportunity of doing hing to promote the circulation of

PUBLICATIONS FOR 1863,

will be announced in due course, f obtaining fresh subscribers for EACHERS' and SCHOLARS' MAGA-

May we ask their friendly aid matter, since it is evident that re not as widely known or used Church Schools as we may ably expect they should be; and important service would be ren- o the Society by an effort to in- the circulation of its publications, on the part of those by whom e already well known, and who ommend them by their own ex- e of their utility.

uses the Committee much regret rd the

H OF JOHN LABOUCHERE, ESQ.,

EASURER of the Institute, who important part in the formation of the Society, and continued his interest in it to the end of his useful life. For many years he took an active part in its public meetings, but declining health latterly compelled him to be absent, although he never ceased to watch its proceedings, and to give it his generous help. The religious and charitable institutions of our Church found in him a liberal supporter; and his practical sympathy, as well as his pecuniary aid, will be greatly missed by the managers of them. The deceased gentleman was the brother of Lord Taunton, and a member of the banking firm of Williams, Deacon, and Co. He departed this life on the 29th July last, in the 65th year of his age.

FUNDS.

The Committee thankfully acknowledge the following additions to the funds of the Society, during the past quarter, earnestly hoping that further help may still be given to enable them to carry on the operations of the Institute with increased efficiency: —

DONATIONS, &c.

Collection at St. James' Bradford	3	2	3
Miss M. Lucas	2	0	0
J. J. S. Lucas, Esq.	2	0	0
Hon. and Rev. Leland Noel . .	0	10	0
Miss Brook	0	10	0
H. Haines, Esq.	5	0	0
St. Thomas' Agar Town . .	1	1	0
E. Higgin, Esq.	5	0	0

SUBSCRIBERS.

The Rev. R. Shepherd . . .	0	10	6
V. Milward, Esq.	1	1	0

Notices of Books.

PATH OF A SUNBEAM, by W. Champneys, M.A., Canon of l's, and Vicar of St. Pancras pp. 76), is a memorial of the young man, early and suddenly to his rest, who, during an life, had constantly realised ine description of God's ser- "The path of the just is as ning light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Very beautifully does the author analyse the character and inner life of one well and intimately known to himself and his family, and trace the brightness of his smile, the cheerfulness of his demeanour, the gladness of his spirit, the warmth of his heart, his kindly sympathy for all around him, and his complete unselfishness (like a sunbeam

in its genial influence wherever its light shone) upward to its source in the Sun of Righteousness;—for it was in union with the Saviour whom he loved, and by seeking the light of the Spirit's teaching, that the character of Frederick Gingell became so pure and exalted. Nor are the lessons for others derivable from such a life omitted, for practical suggestions abound in every page, combined with applications of the fundamental doctrines of the faith which animated the devoted Christian of whom this little book is the memorial. To add to its interest, some brief passages of his own composition, and extracts from letters written to members of his family, showing the estimation in which he was held by various friends, are appended.

CHRIST ALL IN ALL: by the Rev. Philip Henry (Religious Tract Society) is a reprint of the outline, of forty-one Sermons, by the eminent Non-conformist divine, the father of Matthew Henry, the Commentator. It is a devotional exposition of Col. iii. 2, and is full of holy thoughts on the great work of the Redeemer, what He is in Himself, and what He is to His people. It is a book abounding with material for spiritual edification, and with suggestions for those engaged in teaching the foundation truths of the Gospel to others.

SELECTED SERMONS of the Rev. JAMES BOLTON, M.A., late Minister of St. Paul's Episcopal Chapel, Kilburn with introductory remarks by the Rev. W. J. Bolton, M.A. (London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.). This volume will have a special interest to Sunday School Teachers, for it speaks of the life and labours of one who was so well known for his special Addresses to Children, and for his labours in the cause of the Sunday School, from which our own Institute and its publications have so frequently derived advantage. The introduction by the brother of this estimable clergyman—so early removed from his ministry on earth to serve in the upper courts of his Father's house in heaven—not only gives many interesting facts of the personal history of Mr. Bolton, but lovingly analyses his inner life, guided partly by his diaries and the records which have been preserved of his spiritual experience. The Sermons printed in this volume breathe his earnest spirit; his heart-searching anxiety to build up his people in their most holy faith; to lead them to a close and constant walk with God, and to nearer union with their Saviour. As there is evidence of blessing having attended their delivery, so "being dead, he yet speaketh" in these printed discourses, and they cannot fail to benefit those who prayerfully study them.

Notices to Correspondents.

Contributions are thankfully acknowledged from M. S. B.;—W. H. A.;—"Dora;"—S. A. W.;—J. G. F.—F. E. G.;—E. S.; H. T. B.;—G. N. S.;—W. S.;—J. F. B.;—S. B.;—"A Teacher;" "Faith;"—and W. H.

With the next number will be commenced the SEVENTEENTH VOLUME, and the Editors trust that many valued friends of the Sunday School will help, by their contributions, to give increased interest and usefulness to this now old-established Magazine. Any suggestions for its improvement, or any hints as to topics which require attention in reference to the work which may have escaped notice, will be most welcome.

Communications intended for insertion in the next number are solicited as early as possible—not later than the 1st of December—to be addressed "To the Editors of the Sunday School Quarterly Magazine," at the Offices of the Institute, 41, Ludgate Hill, E.C.

Church of England

AY SCHOOL QUARTERLY

MAGAZINE.

1ST JANUARY, 1864.

The Teacher in his Closet.

THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW YEAR.

1863 has closed! and eventful, most eventful has it

fearful war has mown down some thousands of our and desolated their homes! At home, our eyes have been nwonted interest on the far distant battle fields, and the of each day has had a reference to the mighty struggle arties among a people of our own tongue, are waging other.

lst of the constant excitement of events happening *with*-m scarcely to have time to look *within*. The all-absorb-*the war of nations* is calculated to put the machinery a breast in fearful disorder, and to set aside that needful ie Christian warrior, How speeds *the war within?*

lesign of the loving Saviour when He left His glory and unhappy world of ours, was not to destroy men's lives,

but to save them. It was to establish a kingdom of righteousness and peace; and in carrying out this great design every Christian warrior has his part assigned. Turn then aside, dear brother, and tell me—What have *you* done during the past year?

You began the year, it may be, with good resolutions—have you kept them? Conscience told some of you that you were proud—are you more humble? Conscience told you that you were worldly-minded—are you more dead to the world? Conscience told you that you were half-hearted, luke-warm—are you more decided? There were companions and places which conscience told you must be given up, have you done it? There were duties neglected, others unfaithfully discharged—does the new year find you a cheerful giver of time, money, talents,—such things as you have? Is your heart in your work, and are you clear that the work you are engaged in is the Lord's work?

O! surely if (to use another simile) the man of the world sees it good to ascertain his true position; if he be anxious to know how matters stand; if he make it a matter of duty to "take stock",—you and I with higher hopes and nobler aims, must see it for our good, needful, and a positive duty, to try and examine ourselves—to place ourselves in the balance of the sanctuary—nay, like him, "to take stock," and see how much we have gained by trading.

My fellow-teacher, I put the question to you in all brotherly affection. "Is it well with you?" Do you hate sin more at the close than at the beginning of the year? Do you love God more? Is Jesus more precious? have you more delight in His service? Are you more like Him in spirit, temper, conduct? have you more enjoyment in prayer and communion with God? have you more of David's feelings when he exclaimed, "O! how I love Thy law."?

Come up with me to the hill top, and seat yourself on the stone which tells you that you have trodden another mile of life's journey—and as you turn to gaze on the scenery you have passed, and think of the incidents which that single mile has unfolded, incidents neither few nor unimportant to many of you, let the faithful monitor tell her truthful story, and if she call upon you to humble yourself for an uneven walk, or conversation unbecoming your profession, humble yourself ere you take another step, and let the future prove how sincere and heartfelt is your shame.

To not a few of you, I trust, the retrospect would be a pleasing one; it ought to be so to *all* of us. O! how faithful our God has been; how great, how undeserved His mercies; how wondrous His patience and forbearance; how gentle His corrections; how sweet the consolations of His spirit! Brother pilgrim, let thy mind rest awhile on thy Father's dealings with thee; they all tell of love

ıterable, they call for songs of loudest praise; and as thou
ıest of the overflowing stream, let the prayer, so well becoming
ıhus richly owned and blessed ascend from thine inmost heart,
ıat shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards

› dark and unknown future is before us. We commence, but
ıy some of us never witness the close of another year. Before
ıd I, then, step onwards in our way, as we have taken upon
ves duties and responsibilities of high import, let us stir each
ıp to greater faithfulness and diligence.

great and glorious Being to whom we have dedicated our-
deserves "the first fruits"—the *best* we can render. As no
can tell the extent of His love, no limit should tell
ent of our gratitude. To please Him, glorify Him, should
business of life, and scripture on this point is clear
directions. We must "bear *much* fruit;" we must
the things which are behind," and press forward. What-
may have done for our God and Saviour in times past, we
is year, try to *do more:* however well we may have done
r, we must this year, try to do it *better*. Nay, while yet
rtunity is ours, we must *get* all the good, and *do* all the
can. Like men whose business is weighty and urgent, and
no time to trifle, we must be up and doing—and why this
ss? "*the night cometh when no man can work.*"

not, however, forget that to attempt this in our own
would be madness. Jesus must go with us, or hence we
stir. Helpless we must lean on Almighty strength—
ve must yield ourselves to an unerring Guide—and knowing
ıre nothing, can do nothing, we must go with childlike
to Jesus for everything.

l, fellow-teachers, forward!—you whose heart's desire and
› to lead the lambs of the flock to the kind and good
ːo bring young children to Jesus; you, who tell of heaven,
ıe way. Forward, fellow-teachers, forward, and give dili-
ake your calling and election sure—aim at being epistles
.en may see and read—workmen who have no cause to
. Our much loved home will soon be reached, a little
flict and the crown is ours. The warfare we are engaged
faithful soldiers, end in victory; and the *hours of labour*
by ages, yea, an *eternity of rest*.

MADE DISHES.

"Hold fast the form of sound words."—2 TIM. I. 13.

THERE is one subject in connection with Sunday school teaching, on which it strikes me that a word of counsel would not be unprofitable at the beginning of a New Year. It is an evil in no small danger of being lost sight of, for this reason, that it does not rank with things obviously and unexceptionably wrong, but among those which ought rather be classed under the head of FAULTS ON THE RIGHT SIDE. I allude to the waste of labour and power in an *over* anxiety to render instruction *attractive*, to the consequent detriment of what is simple, and sound, and pure, in the message committed to our trust.

To an imaginative mind, influenced by the fervour and enthusiasm of "first love," this will be almost invariably a snare. No failure or disappointment has damped the worker's zeal; and, shrinking from no pains in research and preparation, he takes his lesson in hand with the one idea of making it *acceptable* from Sunday to Sunday, and to that end he elaborates and ornaments, illuminates and embellishes, and so in earnest pursuit after novelty and variety loses sight of "the one thing needful," and fails to scatter the seed of everlasting life.

The result of all this is not long in manifesting itself. His class becomes listless and inattentive when plain Bible words are read, and Bible stories told. These are unpalatable now, and like the Israelites at Taberah (Numbers xi.), they long for the *made dishes*, and are ready to exclaim, "There is nothing at all beside this manna before our eyes." The unadulterated heaven-sent bread is loathsome to their taste, and the teacher who, week after week has served it up so carefully, first in one form, then in another, ground in mills or beat in a mortar, baked in pans or made into cakes, finds, with heart-sickness and surprise, that the dainty morsels have spoiled their relish for the food which can alone satisfy.

And more; in the indulgence of such a style there is reflex harm; we ourselves are almost unconsciously turned from whole-heartedness of desire to glorify God, and win souls to Jesus. The claims of eternity begin to be felt less pressing, the peril of immortal souls less urgent, and soon, by slow degrees, self-love and self-seeking win a lofty place in will, and work, and aim, and energies are frittered

ost in the taxing of every endeavour to gain at any cost the ion and interest of the children.

appointment on all sides is our harvest, for should we succeed vhile, as we are almost sure to do, in fixing wandering eyes aining roving thoughts, it is the most we can expect to). When the tales of death-beds and life-wonders are exhausted, magery becomes common-place, and simile loses its enchant- ainly we shall ransack our brain for something to rouse and and discover with sorrow that our own minds and theirs have nervated by so many calls upon feeling and emotion, d of their strength, and robbed of their soundness. Let us ful, then, that "made dishes" do not occupy too prominent or exclude from our teaching the solid diet on which only rive effectually. Let us *use* them by all means, but with l discretion, and believe that the more sparingly administered, are they likely to answer their right purpose as helps to t end of setting forth the "truth as it is in Jesus." Let closer to the Word in its fulness and beauty, familiarize more with its vivid delineations and unrivalled picture us leading ever to that living food "of which whosoever eateth er hunger." All our efforts must be based on a child-like per- that our feeble agency will be altogether profitless without Spirit's help and blessing. Oh! could we realise, indeed, position as saved ones by His grace, and "workers together " for this short, fleeting moment of life and time, as passing quickly to that judgment-seat where every work made manifest, surely we should have no spirit to deal es! Surely we should be more ready to lay down un- otive, to cast aside secondary consideration, and to go n, soul and strength in His service, one thought in our theme on our tongues, the love of the Saviour who has from hell, and given us an inheritance among them that ed. Therefore, let us "take heed to ourselves, and to all o *feed* the Church of God which he has purchased with lood." (Acts xx. 28.)

C. C. C.

"ALL GRACE ABOUNDING."

"God *is able to make all grace abound.*" How does every word fall with cheering force upon the heart as we set forth once more on a "way we have not passed heretofore!" Grace, in its source and spring, has, indeed, "abounded unto many," but it is spoken of here rather as it flows in countless rills of refreshment, of strength, of comfort, of peace. The blessing can only be enjoyed by those who have been to the fountain, who "know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," who "have tasted that the Lord is gracious," who rejoice that in their own experience "grace reigns through righteousness." To those who have thus received the "gift by grace," the assurance is given to strengthen their trust in God, and to constrain them to joyful service, that "God is able to make all grace abound."

Grace to *work*. Whatever it be that is given us of God to do, be it to occupy the highest or the humblest place, to minister in His sanctuary, or to give a cup of cold water to one of the least of His disciples for His sake; difficult work, uncongenial work, distasteful work, laborious work, unobserved work, unappreciated work,—grace is provided for all, and that to abound.

Grace to *wait*. To have "long patience", to "bear what seems not right, and trust it is not wrong," to rest in the Lord, to realize the soul-cheering thought that

> "Every dark and bending line,
> Meets in the centre of His love,"—

grace for all this, and grace abounding.

Grace to *watch;*—to watch against sin, against Satan, against worldliness of spirit, against impatience of will, against restlessness of heart;—grace to *suffer*, rejoicing in fellowship with a suffering Lord, in being "conformed to the image of God's Son," grace meekly to say, "Not my will;" to "glory in tribulations also."

Grace to pray always and not faint, to "give thanks always for all things;" grace to keep us humble in prosperity; grace to preserve us from fainting in adversity; grace to guide us safely through life; grace to give us "an abundant entrance" into glory at death.

And all this to *abound*. Not to come in drops, but in an overflowing shower, poured out, "good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over." There is a proverb which says "God never *smites* with both hands,"—while He chastens with one hand, He comforts with the other. But His *blessings* are given,

om full hands, "all grace to abound." Why should we ever be raitened in ourselves when we have the "fulness of God" from hich to be filled?

And it is a blessed thought that "*God is able*" to make this grace ound. Yes, GOD is able,—

> "None but the God of spirits can
> Fill up the vast desires of man;"—

it He *is able*. Omnipotent wisdom is never at a loss; omnipotent wer is never over-tasked; omnipotent love never grows weary of aking all grace abound. *All* kinds of grace, restraining grace, rgiving grace, restoring grace, supporting grace, strengthening ace, healing grace, comforting grace, guiding grace, upholding ace. "The Lord will give grace;" grace shall abound till it entuates in glory, such as no eye hath seen, no ear hath heard, no art of man hath ever conceived.

How varied are the feelings with which we take the first step on r yet untrodden path! We look back on clouds which are behind now, and though the coldness of their shadow has not yet passed, see that before us others are rising in the distance. We rejoice victories already won, we tremble when we think of conflicts yet aiting us. We gladly reckon up among our mercies a sphere of efulness, something to do for Him who has so greatly loved us; we rrowfully recollect how mixed have been our motives, how imper- t our efforts, how sin and self have tainted all that we have ought was work for God. But while we throw ourselves and our our at Christ's feet,—"our only plea, dependence upon Him,"— us not yield, as Satan would have us, to a kind of dull paralysis feeling, as though we were and must be "tied and bound with chain of our sins", cast down, and unable to rise. "God is able make all grace abound;" let us seek for a faith which shall grasp is promise, and make it our strong staff and beautiful rod, and we all find that such a faith is always power, as unbelief is always akness; the joy of the Lord will be our strength, and while we all evermore, long as we live, be learning out the humbling lesson our own emptiness, we shall yet have occasion gratefully to knowledge to "the praise of the glory of His grace"—"I have and abound," "I can do all things through Christ which engtheneth me."

> "I glory in infirmity,
> That Christ's own power may rest on me;
> When I am weak, then am I strong,
> Grace is my shield, and Christ my song."

Dora.

OUR DANGERS.

THAT spirit of watchfulness, which is so constantly enjoined by our Lord and His Apostles upon all professing Christians, is especially necessary for those who have undertaken to labour in the Saviour's cause, and are seeking to promote the extension of His kingdom. The reason is evident; the great Enemy of souls, who is continually going about seeking whom he may devour, is doubly anxious to overcome those who are openly waging war against his power, and those under his influence; his most subtle efforts are directed against those who boldly come forward on the Lord's side to fight under His banner against sin, the world and the flesh, and he desires to have them that he may sift them as wheat, even as he strove to overcome the timid Peter in the hour of the Saviour's greatest suffering. No wonder, then, that the Sunday school teacher should find temptation surround him in his work, for he is seeking to turn souls to God, to wrest them from Satan for the Saviour, and to turn them from darkness unto light; and the great Tempter will not suffer him to pursue such a work unmolested, or unharrassed, nor without many efforts to cause him to fall.

It is well, then, to know that as teachers we are exposed to especial dangers—to discover what they are, and where we are most open to attack—in order that we may be watchful on the one hand, and prayerful on the other, knowing our own weakness, and looking for that Divine aid by which it can be made a source of strength.

The *motives* which influence us should be a constant subject of scrutiny. The heart is deceitful even to itself, and we are often little conscious, till we search carefully, of the real motive by which our best services, outwardly looked at, are really prompted. How did we become teachers? Perhaps our ministers appealed for help in their Sunday school work, urged their need of assistance, and the blessing of seeking to win souls for Christ; or, it may be, friends or relatives persuaded us to enter upon it, as a way of usefulness; and our own hearts responded to such appeals, from a desire to be the means of doing good, or an unwillingness to refuse compliance with such solicitation. I speak not of other and more unworthy motives, as the desire to gain the good opinion of friends or acquaintance, or of those with whom we should be connected in the Sunday school; the wish to obtain the position of honour in our congregation which the teacher occupies; or the love of authority which finds its reward in having others placed under its control (for none of these will bear examination); but even in the motives we have

fore spoken of, is there not something unsound, and therefore ngerous? "The love of Christ constraineth us," was the apos-lic rule of action. Winning souls for Him is the true spirit of evangelist, and any other motive than this may be perverted by r great adversary into a source of danger to our own souls—may generate into mere earthly service of a friend or complacency to r pastors, and thus may rob our work of its value as done "unto e Lord," and so deprive us of the teacher's crown.

But even if we began to labour in the humble spirit of one who d felt the love of the Saviour, and desired to make Him known to d loved by those around us, yet must we still watch cautiously *e spirit in which we carry on our work.* As the traveller, starting a long journey to reach a certain point, is tempted to linger on e way by the various objects he meets with on the road, and some-nes is led to abandon his route altogether to follow some new th, which has attracted him upon the way, so are we apt to forget e aim we first proposed to ourselves, and to lose it in the interest the different objects which absorb our attention as we pursue r course. Many teachers would seem to be chiefly interested in sting or perfecting the different modes of instruction—in the ental training of their scholars—or in opening out to them the st fields of knowledge; others are plainly most concerned by their rsonal regard for their scholars, or by friendship with their fellow-bourers, else they would be as willing to take strangers into their sses as to retain their old scholars, and be as pleased to welcome new helper as to greet one of longer standing. Some, too, are ainly influenced strongly by the power of habit—they have been long accustomed to spend their intervals of Sabbath rest in the hool, that the hours would hang heavily on their hands if not thus cupied; while many are kept in the Sunday school by a feeling unwillingness to give up what they have so long pursued; and us, if analysed, the real motive of continuance in well-doing, in ch cases as these, is more than doubtful. Is there not a danger to r own souls in these things? Are we not rendering unaccepta-e service to our Master—may we not be doing harm to His cause ther than promoting it—and withdrawing His smile from us, ther than obtaining a blessing on our souls, when our hearts are t really engaged in working for Him?

Another danger lies in the possibility that we may be unacquainted rsonally with the reality of the truths which we make known to hers. Our minds may comprehend the great plan of redemption thout our hearts being melted into a penitent and loving devotion the Saviour; our intellects may grasp much of the truth which e Bible teaches, but it may not have touched our consciences

as to lead us to re-model our daily life; and thus, while we may be instruments, in God's hand, of making known His will to the young ones placed under our charge, we may ourselves be strangers to the privileges to which they may thus attain. Ought we not continually to test our own state before God, lest while we teach others we should ourselves become cast away? Ought we not to examine our own spirits to see that we know Him of whom we speak, and that we testify to others only of that which we have felt ourselves of His pardoning love and His sanctifying grace?

But the most subtle danger of all to which we are exposed as teachers has yet to be noticed. It may be that we are in earnest in our work—that we really desire the salvation of the children given us to teach, and seek the Saviour's glory in our labour—that we are not ourselves strangers to our Master, but have found pardon and peace in believing—that we strive to do our work well, and carefully fit ourselves for it as far as we have opportunity; yet is there a constant danger of our *not applying to our own souls the lessons which we thus carefully prepare for our classes.* Nor is this a light thing. We study Scripture with the view of seeing how to explain it to the children; we draw out its points of application as it will be best to use it for their instruction; great doctrines of our faith, and precepts for daily practice, are thus enforced and illustrated; and while so engaged we comfort ourselves with the thought of our success in applying Scripture, and bringing out its rich treasures of truth. But what of ourselves? Are we not *substituting* these exercises for the instruction of others for that teaching from the Word of life which our own souls constantly require? Are we not, unconsciously perhaps, imagining that labour for the spiritual welfare of our classes will be accepted in lieu of our own growth in grace, or that this will follow from the other? Satan is here using one of his most dangerous artifices to make shipwreck of our faith. "Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" is a Divinely-inspired question which we shall do well to repeat continually to ourselves, if we would pursue our course safely. No efforts for others' salvation will secure our own; no application of the Word of God to others' need will nourish our own souls; no truth made plain to other minds will illumine our own spirits; no warnings for others' safety will reach our own consciences, unless, *of set purpose*, we first use the lessons from the Bible, which we have prepared for our classes, for our own personal edification, and seek the teaching of the Spirit of God to apply them to our souls with that efficacy which He alone can give.

While then we are watchful of the purity of our motives and of the spirit in which we labour, and analyse our own personal acquaintance

the realities of the religion of the Gospel, let us be also espe-
guarded against allowing the Bible to be applied by us, in its
l lessons, to the teaching of others without first learning its
s ourselves; that so we may secure our own salvation through
g union with the Saviour, as well as gain from among our
y scholars jewels to adorn His crown in the day of His
ring.

W. S.

DEVOTEDNESS TO GOD.

iptures contain many exhortations to the children of God to
ed devotedness, so that this subject is one which Christians
ake into deep consideration, and which should be made the
of much earnest prayer. We are too apt to rest satisfied
g a little for God, devoting ourselves a *little* to His service,
ng for more time, better opportunities, or a wider and higher
labour, forgetting that as servants in the household of our
Master, He himself gives to each of us our appointed
d work, and that we are therefore bound to labour in that
d do that work fully, faithfully, and *devotedly*.

order to do this, we must bear in mind that God is not
vith *outward* services; He commands us to begin by giving
to Him, and then to testify our love for the Father, our
n the Saviour, our communion with the Spirit by our
ss to the service of the living God. "Faith if it have not
ead, being alone," James v. 17, proving that where there
nd scriptural faith, the gift of the Holy Ghost, it cannot
ut must produce good works, as its undeniable evidence;
e to "shew our faith by our works." Several reasons
luced as motives for the dedication of ourselves to God's
. Paul speaks of a most influential one when he says
you therefore, brethren, *by the* MERCIES *of the living God*,
sent your bodies, a *living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto
is your *reasonable service;*" again, "*The love of Christ*"
believers to live to the praise and glory of Him who died
d rose again; and St. Paul further tells us, "For ye are
a *price*, *therefore* glorify God in your body, and in your
are God's;" and St. Peter urges us to "shew forth the

praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light." Thus we have strong scriptural commands to live for God and to dedicate ourselves to His service.

The question then arises, How is it that as Christians professing to have a real interest in the Saviour, owning Him to be our Master, calling His service a delight, enrolling ourselves under His banner as *soldiers* of the Cross, and declaring ourselves willing and ready to fight the good fight of faith, we so often stop short of this entire devotedness to God, and are satisfied with weak and fitful endeavours, or with trivial and half-hearted services? May not one reason be, that we do not sufficiently honour the Holy Spirit, by a constant dependence on His precious influence? Would we be active loving Christians we must go to Him who is indeed "the Lord and giver of life," for constant supplies of grace; without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit all is night and death in the soul of man; where *He* dwells there is life and light; He is the Author of all holiness; He it is who sanctifies us wholly, causing us to grow in grace, and enabling us to walk closely with the Father and His son Jesus Christ;—and we ever find that the nearer we live to God, the more we increase in the knowledge of, and in love to Him, the greater is our delight in His service, and the more constant and unwearied our daily efforts for usefulness to our fellow creatures.

Another reason why we fail in unreserved devotion to God may be, that we do not practically carry out the Lord's command given through his Apostle Paul, "Mortify the deeds of the body," and therefore do not receive the annexed promise "and ye shall live;" it is evident that there is to be a constant exercise of self-denial, and a warfare ever carried on against the world, the flesh, and the devil; and this God's grace can and will enable us to do. His strength will surely be made perfect in our weakness, for "stronger is He that is with us than He that is against us." The 3rd chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians gives us a lovely picture of what the character of the faithful soldier and servant of Jesus Christ should be, and it ought to be our endeavour to delineate in our lives every feature therein presented to us. The chapter is one which may be of great assistance to many who are seeking to run the Christian race, to walk in the narrow way, and to carry on the Christian warfare; but to none can it be more useful than to those amongst us whom God has been pleased to call to be workers in Sabbath schools, where it is of such vital importance that the teachers should devote themselves unreservedly to God's service; living holy, consistent, active lives, that God may be glorified, and precious souls may be won, that many little children may be brought unto Jesus, who careth for the little ones as stray lambs gathered into the fold of the Good Shepherd.

le some may be won by precept, many more will be attracted he example of a holy life to listen to the Word of God and to ve its precious truths. Would we set forth "Christ and Him fied" to those who gather round us on the Sabbath-day in our ay schools, we must ourselves seek through the week to be and decided imitators of Christ; He is the model set forth in ure for us to study, He Himself invites all, saying, "Come arn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." The Apostle exhorts us to "let this mind be in us which was in Christ " and St. Peter tells us to imitate His *patience*, "for even to were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving example that ye should follow his steps." The more we seek nity to Christ's image and holy walk, the more we are weaned n and separated to the service of our Heavenly Father. The must be like the gracious Master, separated from the pollu- the world, full of zeal and patience and love, following Him the midst of active duties as well as in the enjoyment of s privileges; and we ought to bring duty, amusement, , in short, everything to this test, has it the approbation of d how would the Saviour have acted in like circumstances? ler to be prepared, at all times and in all places, for con- unreserved devotion to God's service, we should make a use of all the means of grace which He vouchsafes to us, should be our daily companion, and we should be much in aving close and constant communion with God, that daily n grace we may honour Him by bringing forth the fruits irit, and evidencing in our lives our devotedness to His hus His blessing will surely rest upon us, and He will to glorify Him in body and in soul.

May

The Cracked Bell.

harsh sound doth this bell make in every ear! The od enough; it is the rift that makes it so unpleasingly

like is this bell to a scandalous and ill-lived teacher! is honourable, his noise is heard far enough, but the is noted in his life mars his doctrine, and offends those else would take pleasure in his teaching. It is possible one, even by that discordious noise, may ring in others umphant Church in heaven; but there is no remedy for the fire, whether for his reforming or judgment.

Bishop Hall.

The Teacher in his Study.

SACRED SITES DESCRIBED BY MODERN TRAVELLERS.

I.—Mount Sinai.

We put off our shoes from off our feet before approaching the most revered spot on Mount Sinai, or rather Horeb (as they call this part of the mountain), where our Lord is said to have appeared to Moses in the burning bush.

The ascent of Mount Sinai is as fatiguing almost as that of St. Catherine. Starting from the convent, the walk commences by the ascent of what is now called Mount Horeb, the general name in Scripture for the district in which Sinai stood, but here considered as the breast from which the peak of Sinai rises. Rude steps have been made by the monks, very wearisome to climb: the only relief is where they have been broken, or where a sheet of granite occurs. Two arched gateways, with a steep ascent between them, lead to a small plain surrounded by rocks; the scene, according to Mahomedan tradition, of Moses' interview with the Almighty. A noble cypress tree towers in the centre, with a well of excellent water at its foot.

On the summit stands a chapel and a mosque. I climbed to the top of the former, the more elevated of the two, and from thence enjoyed a superb prospect—similar to that from Mount Catherine. The echo of a pistol there is most extraordinary—mountain after mountain takes up the tale, answering each other across the deep valleys.

There is nothing in the Bible to lead us to suppose Mount Sinai a very lofty mountain; yet that it was some distance from the camp, though visible from it, we may gather from the account of Moses' return with the two tables:—"Moses turned and went down from the mount, and as soon as he drew nigh unto the camp he saw the calf and the dancing."

Yet, after all, what avails the inquiry concerning the exact spot if we think merely of the stage and not of the actions performed on it? This is the wilderness of Sinai—there can be no doubt of that, and whichever the individual mount may have been, every hill around heard the thunder, and quaked at the sound of the trumpet waxing louder and louder, as God descended in the cloud, and trembled at the "still small voice" that deeper than the thunder, and high above the trumpet, spoke to every man's ear and heart that fiery law—holy, just, and good, existing from all eternity, which requires of man that spotless obedience, which he cannot yield, and at the first

gression, even in thought, of its purity, lays him under the of eternal death,—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all eart, and thy neighbour as thyself."
e only of Adam's seed, the man Christ Jesus, had fulfilled that we must travel to Jerusalem, we must look to the cross on y, to obtain pardon for having broken it.

Lord Lindsay, 1838.

is on this day that we came to the real desert, where man welt, nor the son of man abode; a land that you can neither nor sow; no city, village, or hamlet; not a house, not a cot- ible as you proceed; no fields, no vineyards, no trees of any ion; but a land scorched, burnt up by the heat of the sun, terile and unfruitful, abundant only in torrents, hills, and ns which bear the stamp of horror and the image of death. I saw vast clouds rising over the desert like smoke, but we nd them to consist merely of dust and the finest sand, caught ie wind. These sands are always shifting: where to-day is clear, to-morrow you will find a little mountain in its

Breydenbach, 1483.

r had we entered upon the plain, when in front of us stood ible object of our desire—Horeb-Sinai, the mountain of I cannot well define, so as to make intelligible to others, f my mind at this time. I was not excited; there was enthusiasm in my heart; no religious fervour. I felt it realise the fact that my eyes were fixed upon the hoar l which was connected so wondrous and so sacred a story l importance only to that of the incarnation of the God- el far more while writing this page than I did while gaz- ie scene then before me. One of our Arabs called my o the mountain—pointing to it, and repeatedly saying, usa," which is the Arabic name of Horeb and Sinai, and ooking up in my face to see what effect it had upon

tive reader of Scripture will have observed that Horeb spoken of as a distinct mountain, but rather as a moun- ict, in which Sinai, the mountain of God is situate, and s really a part.
May, 1842, was a memorable day. I made the ascent ai. Not a particle of this wilderness of granite about , which had not quaked at the mysterious and awful

presence of God by which it was overspread; not one of its numberless clefts and caverns in which was not heard and echoed the voice of the trumpet which sounded so long and waxed louder and louder.

The voice of Jehovah sounds not now in the natural ear of man; but His law, with the divine record that perpetuates it, is imperishable like Himself, and in that law is the spiritual presence of God, still overshadowing Mount Sinai and its sacred precincts.

The ascent is commenced at a deep ravine lying to the south west of the convent of St. Catherine, and the first stage carried us over such part of Horeb as forms a kind of breast work, or foundation, from which Gebel Mousa, the alleged peak of Mount Sinai, springs. This part of the journey is made tolerably easy, by means of large slabs or blocks of granite, disposed in such order as to give a firm footing; but as many have been washed away from time to time by winter torrents, some effort is required to keep the road. In about half-an-hour the ascent becomes still more fatiguing and steep, and the way lies between impending waters of vast magnitude, and through two arched gateways at a short distance from each other, the first of which reminded me of the "wicket gate" of John Bunyan — whither Evangelist had directed Christian, and from which he was swerving when the "hill" (of legality) seemed so high, and also that side of it that was next the wayside, did hang so much over that Christian was afraid to venture further, lest the hill should fall on his head, wherefore "then he stood still, and he wist not what to do." The latter of the arched ways introduced us to a rather extensive plain or platform, in which grows a fine towering cypress, and near it a roughly constructed building, called the Chapel of the convent, and another in commemoration of the flight of Elijah to Horeb. From this spot the summit of Mount Sinai is visible, and from thence the direct ascent is made. It is toilsome and difficult. The monks who live upon traditions, point out the various objects of interest, but make sad work in referring to scripture names and narratives. When we were rather more than half way up the peak of Sinai, they pointed out a spot in which tradition says that Moses surveyed the conflict between Joshua and Amelek; and surely no place more probable or picturesque could well be selected. Proceeding to the very highest spot so as to command the vast region of mountainous scenery, my mind was absorbed by the terrific grandeur of the picture. In the words of an enterprising and intelligent traveller, of an earlier day, Sir J. Henniker, I may say, "It would seem as if Arabia Petræa had once been an ocean of lava, and that while its waves were running literally mountains high, it was commanded suddenly to stand still."

Rev. George Fisk, 1842.

If I were to make a model of the end of the world, it would be
om the valley of the convent of Mount Sinai.

Sir J. Henniker.

ls we advanced, the valley still opened wider and wider with a
tle ascent, and became full of shrubs and tufts of herbs, shut in
ach side by lofty granite ridges, with rugged shattered peaks a
sand feet high, while the face of Horeb rose directly before us.
i my companion and myself, involuntarily exclaimed, "Here is
enough for a large encampment!" It was a scene of solemn
leur wholly unexpected, and such as we had never seen; and
ssociations which at the moment rushed upon our minds were
t overwhelming. I was affected by the strangeness and over-
ing grandeur of the scenes around us; and it was for some
ifficult to realize that we were now actually within the very
cts of that Sinai on which, from the earliest childhood, I had
t and read with so much wonder. Yet, when at length the
sion came with its full force upon my mind, although not
o the melting mood, I could not refrain from bursting into

examination of this afternoon convinced us that here was
ough to satisfy all the requisitions of the Scriptural narra-
far as it relates to the assembling of the congregation to
he law. Here, too, one can see the fitness of the injunction
unds around the mount, that neither man nor beast might
too near.
mes of Horeb and Sinai are used interchangeably in the
:h to denote the mountain on which the law was given,
circumstance has naturally occasioned difficulty to com-
. The most obvious and common explanation is to regard
) as the general name for the whole cluster, and the other
s designating a particular mountain; much as the same
employed by the Christians at the present day.

Dr. Robinson, 1838.

ASKING QUESTIONS OF THE BIBLE.

THOSE of our readers who have not read the following passages from one of the sermons of the late Dr. Arnold, will thank us, we feel sure, for introducing them to their notice, as eminently suggestive and useful for all who desire thoroughly to understand the portions of the Bible which they are privileged to teach to their classes. The same mode of study, simple and obviously wise as it is, will of course commend itself to all who desire to nurture their own souls by feeding on the Word of life.

"It is quite clear," says Dr. Arnold, "that what hinders a true understanding of anything is vagueness; and it is by the process of asking questions that vagueness is to be dispelled; for in the first place, it removes one great vagueness or indistinctness, which is very apt to beset the minds of many, namely the not clearly seeing whether they understand a thing or no, and much more the not seeing what it is they do understand, and what it is which they do not. Take any one of our Lord's parables, and read it even to a young child; there will be something of an impression conveyed, and some feelings awakened, but all will be indistinct,—the child will not know whether he understands or no, but will soon gain the habit of supposing that he does, as that is at once the least troublesome and the least unpleasant to our vanity. And this same vague impression is often received by uneducated persons from reading or hearing either the Scriptures or sermons; it is by no means the same as if they had read or heard something in an unknown language, but yet they can give no distinct account of what they have heard or read —they do not know how far they understand it, and how far they do not.

"Here, then, is the use of 'asking questions,'—asking questions of ourselves or of our book, I mean,—for I am supposing the case of our reading, when it can rarely happen that we have any living person at hand to give us an answer. Now taking the earliest and simplest state of knowledge, it is plain that the first question to put to ourselves will be, 'Do I understand the meaning of all the words and expressions in what I have been reading?' I know that this is taking things at their very beginning, but it is my wish to do so. Now, so plain and forcible is the English of our Bible, generally speaking, that the words difficult to be understood will probably not be many: yet some such do occur, owing in some instances to a change in the language, as in the words 'let' and 'prevent,' which now signify the one 'to allow, or suffer to be done,' and the

ther 'to stop, or hinder,' but which signified when our translation as made, the first 'to stop or hinder,' and the second 'to be before- and with us,' as in the prayer 'Prevent us, O Lord, in all our oings with Thy most gracious favour,' the meaning is, 'Let thy vour be with us beforehand, O Lord, in whatever we are going to o.' In other instances, the words are difficult because they are sed in a particular sense, such as we do not learn from our com- ion language, of which kind are the words 'elect,' 'saint,' 'justifi- ition,' 'righteousness,' and many others. Now, if we ask ourselves 'hether we understand these words or no,' our common sense when ius questioned, will readily tell us whether we do or not, although we had not directly asked the question, it might never have ought about it. Of course, our common sense cannot tell us what ie true meaning is, that is a matter of information, and our means gaining information may be more or less; but still a great step gained, the mist is partly cleared away; we can say to ourselves iere is something which I do understand, and here is something hich I do not,' I must keep the two distinct, for the first I may se, the second I cannot. I will mark it down as a thing about hich I may get explanation at another time, but at present it is blank in the picture, it is the same as if it were not there. This ien, is the first process of self-questioning, adapted as I have ready said to those whose knowledge is most elementary.

"Suppose, however, we are got beyond difficulties of this sort,— iat the words and particular expressions of the Scripture are mostly ear to us. Nay, take again one of our Lord's parables—say, for istance, that of the labourers in the vineyard: we read it, and find iat he who went to work at the eleventh hour received as much as e who had been working all the day. This seems to say that he ho begins to serve God in his old age shall receive his crown of lory no less than he who has served him all his life. But now try ie process of self-questioning. What do I think that Christ means ie to learn from this? What is the lesson to me? What is it to iake me feel, or think, or do? If it makes me think I shall receive n equal share of glory if I begin to serve God in my old age, and ierefore, if it leads me to live carelessly, this is clearly making hrist encourage wickedness, and such a thought is blasphemy. He annot mean me to learn this from it; let me look at the parable gain. Who is it who is reproved in those words which seem to ontain its real object? It is one who complains of God for having ewarded others equally with himself. Now this I can see is not a ood feeling: it is pride and jealousy. In order, then, to learn what he parable means me to learn, let me put myself in the position of hose reproved in it. If I complain that others are rewarded by

God as much as I am, it is altogether a bad feeling and one which I ought to check, for I have nothing to do with God's dealings to others—let me think of what concerns myself. Here I have the lesson of the parable complete, and here I find it is useful to me. But if I take it for a different object, and suppose that it means to encourage waiting till the eleventh hour—waiting till we are old before we repent—we find that we make it out to be actually mischievous to us. And thus we gain a great piece of knowledge—namely, that the parables of our Lord are mostly designed to teach some one particular lesson, with respect to some one particular fault, and that if we take them generally, as if all in them was applicable to all persons, we shall absolutely be in danger of deriving mischief from them instead of good. It is true that, in this particular parable, the gross wickedness of such an interpretation as I have mentioned is guarded against even in the story itself, because those who worked only at the eleventh hour are expressly said to have stood idle so long only because no man had hired them; their delay, therefore, was no fault of their own. But even if this circumstance had been left out, it would have been just the same, because the general rule is, that we apply to a parable only for its particular lesson, and do not strain it to anything else. Had this been well understood, no one would have ever found so much difficulty in understanding the parable of the unjust steward.

"This is another great step towards the dispelling vagueness, to apply the particular lesson of each part of Scripture to that state of knowledge, or feeling, or practice in ourselves, which it was intended to benefit; to apply it as a lesson to ourselves, not as a general truth for our neighbours. And the very desire to do this makes us naturally look with care to the object of every passage—to see to whom it was addressed, and on what occasion, for this will often surely guide us to the point that we want. But in order to do this we must strive to clothe the whole in our own common language—to get rid of those expressions which to us convey the meaning faintly, and to put it into such others as shall come most strongly home to us. This I have spoken of on other occasions, and I have so often witnessed the bad effects of not doing so, that I am sure it may well bear to be noticed again, I mean the putting such words as 'persecution,' 'the cares and riches of the world,' 'the kingdom of God,' 'confessing Christ,' 'denying Christ,' and many others, into a language which to us has more lively reality, which makes us manifestly see that it is of us, and of our common life, and of our dangers, that the Scripture is speaking, and not only of things in a remote time and country, and under circumstances quite unlike our own. Therefore, I have a strong objection

to the use of what is called peculiarly religious language, because I am sure that it hinders us from bringing the matter of that language thoroughly home to us; our minds do not entirely assimilate with it, or, if they fancy that they do, it is only by their becoming themselves affected, and losing their sense of the reality of things around them. For our language is fixed for us, and we cannot alter it; and into that common language in which we think and feel, all truth must be translated, if we would think and feel respecting it at once rightly, clearly, and vividly. Happy is he who, by practising this early, has embued his own natural language with the spirit of God's wisdom and holiness, and who can see, and understand, and feel them better, because they are so put into a form with which he is perfectly familiar.

"More might be said, very much more, but here I will now pause. In this world, wherein heavenly things are, after all, hard to seize and fix upon, we have great need that no mists of imperfect understanding darken them, over and above those of the corrupt will. To see them clearly, to understand them distinctly and vividly, may, indeed, after all, be vain; a thicker vail may yet remain behind, and we may see and understand, and yet perish. Only the clear sight of God in Christ can be no light blessing; and there may be a hope, that understanding and approving with all our minds His excellent wisdom, the light may warm us as well as assist our sight, that we may see, and not in our vague and empty sense, but in the force of the Scriptural meaning of the word—may see, and so believe."

NOW.

Rise! for the day is passing,
And you lie dreaming on;
The others have buckled their armour,
And forth to the fight are gone.
A place in the ranks awaits you,
Each man has some part to play;
The Past and the Future are nothing,
In the face of the stern To-day.

Rise! if the Past detain you,
Her sunshine and storms forget;
No chains so unworthy to hold you
As those of a vain regret;
Sad or bright, she is lifeless ever
Cast her phantom arms away,
Nor look back—save to learn the lesson
Of a nobler strife To-day. *Adelaide Procter.*

SCRIPTURE PHILOLOGY.

No. XI.—Our Lord's Idioms (*Continued*).

John viii. 24. "I am *He*."

The more pious Jews ever did, and still do expect, Messiah: this is sure both from their writings, and their converse; for "the coming of the Just One" forms still the highest topic of their present too fatal superstition. His advent forms the twelfth article of their creed, in which there are but thirteen. It is this:—

"I believe with a perfect faith that Messiah will come: and, though He delays His coming, I will nevertheless always look for Him till He comes." (*Buxtorf.*)

Deep-seated opinions about Him abound in the Talmudic treatises, founded on the basis of the true Prophecies, but with very wild and outrageous fancies, such as are common to these writings, and which it requires a strong word to designate.

Because Prophecy predicts such opposite things of "Him that shall come," the treatises declare that there shall be two Messiahs—one the Son of Joseph, the other the Son of David: one to suffer, one to reign.

Because Prophecy foretells the time, and the Messiah delays, these writings say He is delayed by the sin of the nation, but that He is in Paradise. In the treatise named Nishmath chajim, where a certain favoured Rabbi gets admission into Paradise, he writes thus—"When I approached the Messiah He asked me, saying, 'what do the children of Israel in the world from which thou camest?' and I answered, 'they are in daily expectation of Thee.' Whereupon He presently cried aloud, and wept!"

Because Prophecy foretells also the ineffable glories of His eternal and heavenly reign, these Talmudic books describe such supernatural events as the following:—There shall be a dew, called the bone-dew, which shall make the pious dead to vegetate from the ground like a herb; or, in other words, bring on their resurrection. There shall be constant festivity; and Behemoth, who feeds on "a thousand hills," and the serpent Leviathan, and the great fowl called Bar Juchné, shall be served up to contribute to it; and some of the silk apparel for the occasion has been woven by Eve while yet in innocence. There shall also be entertainments and spectacles commencing with a long, and hard-fought battle between Behemoth and Leviathan,

before they are slain for the festive purpose; in short, wonders which no book of avowed Eastern fiction, can possibly exceed. But when you read these things, dear fellow-teachers, do not despise the Jew; nor in his presence especially speak lightly of his credulity, but remember, always, that St. Paul had "perpetual heaviness, and continual sorrow in his heart" in the knowledge of their brotherhood, and of their unpardoned state; a state which *our* formal, and in Roman Catholic countries, superstitious Christianity, has confirmed, rather than our purer element, at present, removed. "Through our mercy," they have not yet "obtained mercy:" but the day shall come when "the many" of them at last shall acknowlege, that

"I AM HE."

And who is "HE," the "the Just One?" He calls Himself often, "the Son of Man,"—because "the Word was made flesh!" And "the Son of God," because "from of old, from everlasting," he was "in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God;" and states, "he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," because "he is the *image* of the invisible God, the first born of every creature;" or, if we may reverently think such a thing, God's photograph fixed by "the light that no man can approach unto." He declares also, "I and my Father are One," because in thought, word, and deed, when on earth, and now in the glory of the Father, His thoughts, words, and deeds, are those of "God, *our Saviour*": "and no man hath" *otherwise* "seen God, at any time." And further "no man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son shall" thus "reveal Him." Again, and to sum up all, He thus announces who he is; "Verily I say unto you, before Abraham was, I AM:" making Himself "equal with God," and taking the very express title and name by which the Everlasting God first made himself known. And this is our

"I AM HE."

But besides this objective revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ, there is what may be called the subjective one. In the above descriptions of His majesty, we learn what our Saviour is in Himself. There is another side in which to regard Him, namely, what He is to us. And here the answer to the question who "HE" is, is, truly, that this "Son of Man" is "the Christ of God:" He is no mere "Prophet," nor "teacher sent from God;" nor like the earthly Moses, the Head Servant of God's heavenly house; but "the Anointed"—"the Messiah"—"the Christ"—who was to do, and is doing, for and in us what none of these exalted yet perishing fellow-men, could do—that is to say, saving our souls from death, and raising our bodies from the dust.

And this brings us to His work, "I am HE"—He who had to

reconcile God to man in order that the fallen children of Adam may receive the benefit of what God can do for them—("this commandment have I received from my Father,")—*has done it—done it once, and done it all!* It does not need to be done over again, either in whole or in part; either by man's "dead works," or by man's humble faith:—"dead works," as the Apostle calls them: works that have no life in them before God, and to the end of expiating sin.

This great work done, our exalted Saviour has now to reconcile man to God; and "to save evermore" those who have "received the reconciliation." Is this a harder work? In regard to impenitent men, awful truth! it seems, indeed, to be so; for on the one side the Mediator has *God*—the Good One—to do with, if we may use the phrase with reverence—and on the other, wretched, fallen man, upheld in his rebellion by "the Wicked One."

We say our Messiah reconciled God to man. We entered upon this topic, and defended this *essential* truth, in our last number. Since then, we have met with the following careful and precise definition of the meaning of the word reconciliation in Holy Scripture, from the pen of our best word-master, Dr. Trench, now Archbishop of Dublin, seconded by the very deep scholarship of Bengel; and we quote with very great pleasure, because our statement is confirmed by *such* a divine:—

"The Christian καταλλαγή, has two sides to it. It is first a reconciliation by which God has reconciled us to Himself, laid aside His holy anger against our sins, and received us into favour; a reconciliation effected once for all for us by Christ upon His cross; so 2 Cor. v. 18, 19; Rom. v. 10,—in which last it is a pure passive—'to be received by Him into favour with whom we were in dis-esteem.' But καταλλαγή, is secondly, and subordinately the reconciliation by which we are reconciled to God; the daily deposition under the influence of the Holy Spirit, of the enmity of the old man towards God. 2 Cor. v. 20. All attempts to make this secondary meaning of the word to be the primary, rest not on an unprejudiced exegesis, but on a foregone determination to get rid of God's anger against sin." We trust, however, that the conclusion in these last two lines, applies to very few of those who have been *afraid* to speak of the need of reconciling a *loving* God, forgetful of His full perfections.

Now what we have said, and what we have here quoted, ought (we think) to settle the minds of all our dear fellow-teachers who are readers of this Magazine. We beg them to confirm themselves by examining all the passages in which the greek word occurs, in all which they will recognise this two-fold exhibition of truth in this "word of salvation." Reconciliation—our yearning mother—stretches

forth both her hands, saying, I have presented the ransom-price to God, He has accepted it; for Himself, at so great cost, was pleased to provide it. I now, further, present His consequent favour and grace to you; "receive the reconciliation;" "be ye reconciled to God!" Dear fellow-teachers, do you feel that God is reconciled to you; that there is henceforth from Christ's incarnation, "peace on earth, good will towards men?" And do you so fully believe it, and the love of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that provided it, that you can no more willingly offend Him, but when solicited to sin that grace may still much more abound as at that time past, if that were possible, say from the depth of your soul, "God forbid!" If so, all is well, so far, and up to the present hour; but, O brothers, let us hold to the Messiah, and to the faith of His teaching day by day, for to the end we shall want One "*able* to save," and this Son of God, and Son of Man, stands forth in all the glories of His Godhead and exalted Manhood, and proclaims with trumpets

"I AM HE."

There is one text we should like to notice here in which reconciliation is mentioned, and which can meet with no solution or explanation in commentators as far as we can collect, on a one-sided view of the truth. It is Col. i. 20. Here the Apostle affirms the reconciliation of "*things in heaven*," by the blood of atonement, as well as things in earth. Now in the Holy Scriptures we never read that Jesus' blood cleansed the sins of Angels. The wicked angels "have nothing in Him," who took not on Him their nature, but ours; and the good angels have no sins to expiate, or enmity to remove. Yet, here, God is said by Christ to reconcile to Himself the angels above, as well as men below. Well now, if it be remembered that He is so pure, so high, so holy, that the very heavens are not clean in His sight, and that "He charg*ed*, (not chargeth) His angels with folly,"—we know not when, or what about—we may see, intently regarding the mystery of reconciliation *on God's side*, that He can now through Jesus for ever tolerate the creature imperfections of angels without the least tarnish to His glory in their eyes, for to all eternity all His perfections will appear illustrious in and through Him who is glorified "with that glory which He had with His Father before the foundation of the world."

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For *of Him*, and to Him, and through Him are *all things*; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Tenby. G. N. S.

SOME THOUGHTS CONCERNING THE REASONABLENESS OF THE PLAN OF SALVATION.

When a man says, I will not believe what I cannot understand, we know he is simply talking nonsense; because our whole existence is a mystery, and there is, in truth, nothing which we understand thoroughly. But when an objector says, I will not receive a certain doctrine because it appears to me contrary to reason, we may be sure, if the doctrine be true, that he has got a wrong view of it; and we ought to try to put it in a better light for him. We should expect to find in revelation, as in nature, much that is above our comprehension, but nothing contrary to our reasoning faculties, for they must have been given by the Creator for the very purpose of investigating and appreciating His various communications. Our own minds have by some process, logical or otherwise, become reconciled to whatever we believe, and we cannot refuse to others the full exercise of their reason so long as they confine it to its legitimate functions of examining evidence, testing the probability of suggested facts by comparing them with what they already know, and making logical deductions from admitted premises. I fully believe that all the dealings of God with man are, to the extent of man's limited knowledge and comprehension, in perfect agreement with his natural instincts and reason: and that in treating of doctrines and facts which rest on revelation, it would be well to regard this accordance, not only as a means of placing truth in an acceptable light to others, but because however firm may be our faith as founded on testimony and fortified by experience, it cannot but be cheered and strengthened by the added force of inherent probability. And we shall do well to remember that where there are two or more ways of looking at a subject, although we may prefer one of them, it may be that our neighbour will think differently; and however we may be satisfied that ours is the better view, the great point is that he also may receive the truth. The evidence on which it is accepted by him, and the process whereby he accommodates his mind to it, are things of comparatively little moment. He who would teach others must be content to meet the requirements of various intellects, and be "all things to all men that he may by all means save some."

In speaking of justification: faith is too often treated as meaning only belief in the atonement, whereby we appropriate the benefits of our Lord's passion; but this is putting a part for the whole. We are to believe in "Jesus Christ *and* Him crucified;" not in His

sacrifice alone, but in all that is revealed concerning Him. And it is written, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness;" not that he believed *in* God, or in any doctrines or system of religion; but that he believed God's promise and trusted in Him: and there is some danger in looking at this doctrine of justification by faith from a single point of view, especially when we come to teach it to others. We are quite right to consider that Christ died for sinners, "the just for the unjust," and by His obedience fulfilled the law for man; but when we speak of a vicarious sacrifice and "imputed righteousness," and find, as we often do, that other men's minds are unable to reconcile these doctrines with their sense of justice, and are disposed to regard the system as a kind of make-believe which they cannot assent to, we should remember that the philosophy of salvation as set forth in Scripture, is that the saved become part of the Saviour, being made members of His mystical body. Because the difficulty of one suffering for others, and the obedience of one being imputed to many (a common, but very incorrect way of expressing a most important truth), is dispelled as soon as we appreciate the reality of this union: "I am the vine, ye are the branches," said our Lord, "abide in me." The Head having paid the penalty, the body is free; Christ having fulfilled the law, His members are delivered from the curse of disobedience. So then, what man has to believe is reasonable enough; the only mystery is where we should expect to find it, in the mighty operation of God, whereby the union is effected.

In Kingsley's "Gospel of the Pentateuch," it is said of Abraham, "his faith was counted unto him for righteousness, because it *was* righteousness, and made him do righteous deeds." Undoubtedly the faith here spoken of necessitated and involved the performance of all possible good, and may, in a certain sense, be called the righteousness of which it was the inevitable cause: and salvation might have been of faith instead of by works, because the principle which produces good deeds is more valuable than right conduct, which may possibly proceed from no fixed principle, or even from unworthy motives. But it seems to me (as the author probably meant to imply) that faith is in itself better than any righteousness it may produce, because it is essential rectitude of nature, and the very perfection of a created being. And herein I believe we may see the real reason why man is justified by faith; the truth being, not that God is willing to accept an easy substitute for the perfect obedience which fallen man cannot render, but that He requires from man the highest homage of which his nature is capable—a service far above mere obedience.

For what is the confidence by which a man can surrender the present and visible for the invisible and future, and can bear to lose

the desire of his eyes and the comfort of his life? to have but daily bread, and even that sometimes withheld until the last moment—to suffer hope deferred, expectation disappointed, pain and weariness, till the whole being is shaken with agony, and yet cling with firm and loving trust to the unseen God, his Saviour, and say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him?" What is this but the greatest honour a creature can give to his Creator, and at the same time the highest elevation of his own necessarily dependent nature? It is possibly a moral perfection to which "angels, who are greater in power and might," cannot attain; and this, again, may be the reason why God the Son "took not upon Him the nature of angels, but took upon Him the seed of Abraham," whereby the manhood being taken into God was made higher than the angels, so that the redeemed shall reign over them in the future glory.

It seems, indeed, that the chief use of that great tribulation which appears to be the special lot of some of the purest and noblest here (who seem scarcely to need so much for the mere trial of their faith), is to teach us the reality of these truths, and make us feel and know that while in the extremity of man's weakness and blindness he lies, as Tennyson expresses it,—

> "Upon the world's great alter stairs,
> That slope through darkness up to God,
> An infant crying in the night,
> An infant crying for the light,
> And with no language but a cry,"—

there is a God "who hideth Himself," and yet is an ever present Saviour, who "never faileth those who trust in Him;" and then, looking backward on our past life, experience and reason come in aid of faith to assure our hearts that He is leading us by a way that we know not, but which He knows to be the best and only way for us, to happiness as far above our expectation as our sufferings would be beyond our unassisted endurance. Yet this true faith is perhaps the hardest possible task to human nature, and we cannot but feel, amid the changes of a life in which we have nothing that we can call our own, and wherein the affections, which are the highest attributes of our nature, are continually being wounded by removal of those dear to us, that in very truth "the creature was made subject to vanity *not willingly*, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope." We *need* a glorious prospect beyond to reconcile us to the sorrows of this present world, to enable us to follow the footsteps of Him who was made perfect through suffering, and with St. Paul, be ready even "to be made conformable to His death, if by any means we may attain to the resurrection of the dead." Nature shrinks from these things. "The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak," and only He

who made us and "hath been touched with the feeling of our infirmities," can sustain us in the way He hath appointed for us.—But thus "faith worketh experience, and experience hope."

Perhaps before leaving a subject of so great importance, it may be well to guard against the possibility of misapprehension, by a distinct statement that in endeavouring to show the high value of faith as a quality, and its propriety as the condition of salvation, there has been no idea of suggesting it as a *meritorious* cause. If I have succeeded in clearly expressing my meaning, this assertion is quite superfluous, as indeed it ought to be, in speaking of "the free gift of God." I have, however, seen reason to conclude that some of those even who most earnestly contend for the doctrine of justification by faith instead of by works, do in effect unconsciously imply a similarity of nature instead of an opposition in the substitution, and regard it rather as a price than a condition; these two things being essentially different, and in this case contrary in principle. Faith is a sure plea for mercy and grace, but ought not to be regarded in the light of a "valuable consideration" for the favour it ensures. To use a very simple illustration: suppose a man were to display the greatest confidence in us, we should not consider that we therefore owed him anything, though we should be disposed to feel towards him a degree of affection which would make us do for him anything in our power. But such benefaction would be of grace, not of debt. Yet faith does create a moral claim by virtue of the promise on which it is founded, and this is in proportion to its extent. For instance: if a man promise to another, he thereby incurs two liabilities; one from his duty to God, which requires him to speak truth, and therefore to keep his word quite irrespective of his neighbour's rights or conduct; the other to his neighbour, not to disappoint the expectation he has raised; and this latter bond is proportioned to the other's faith, for if the promise had been lightly treated, the man to whom it was made refusing to consider it as binding, and never expecting it to be fulfilled, it is plain that the breach of it would be no injustice to him, and would only be culpable so far as it involved a lie; while, on the other hand, if he believed and acted upon it, in proportion as his faith in the promise was apparent would the obligation to perform it be recognised and increased. In like manner, whilst we know assuredly that God will keep His word, for His truth's sake, our own faith, besides supplying (to some extent) the condition, which if fulfilled, would bind His justice by the new covenant, yields us the further assurance that His love and mercy will not suffer the hope of the faithful to be disappointed, "because they trust in Him."

Crater.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS.

ROMANS VIII. 10.

"The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life, because of righteousness."

There is much conjecture and difficulty with many about this passage. Antithesis is perceived, but that antithesis is misunderstood, and so the sense is bound fast in the cloud created.

We have need to refer back to the gist of the argument. St. Paul is saying by implication that every man is either in the flesh or in the spirit. To be "in the spirit," he teaches us, is to be "in Christ" —to be "one with Christ, and Christ with us."

Now this union of Christ with us, dates back to the time when "the WORD was made flesh," and from this reciprocity "the first man Adam," for his part contributing "the flesh," and "the last Adam" supplying "the spirit," it comes to pass that when He died, we died; when He rose, we rose; and when He took His exalted seat, we were raised to "heavenly places," and this is constantly presented to our faith in the apostolic explanation of the mystery in all the epistles.

It was in order that Christ's death in the flesh might be our death in the flesh, that He took human nature, as the Christian well knows; and so, writes the Apostle, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ, were baptised into his death?" And again, 2 Cor. v. 14, "we thus judge, that if one died for all, then *all died*:" for so the sense is.

Now then, "if Christ *be in you*, the body is dead, because of sin;" that is to say, *the body died when He died*: "but the Spirit is *life* because of righteousness;" namely, life in you as well as in Him, even in this mortal state, if you are in Him: and so it follows that "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you," in the natural order of things by-and-by.

This mystical, yet not mysterious, truth had been shewn a few verses before, in ch. vii.—"Ye are become dead by the body of Christ," v. 4. And again, v. 6, "When *we were in the flesh*, the

motions of sin . . . . but now we are delivered . . . . . being dead in that *in which we were held*"—namely, in the body or flesh of Christ, as we all were originally in the body or flesh of Adam. (See marginal translation.)

"The Spirit is *life* because of righteousness"—observe, "is *life*," not is *alive*, as if the antithesis ay between the body and spirit of man. The Holy Ghost is "the Spirit of Life;" its author, even in regard to life-natural, as is recorded in the 1st of Genesis.

From the above apostolic statement it follows, that Christians have now no more death to fear—"there is no more death"—they have died, and are "passed from death unto life," and may, or may not have to "sleep in Jesus," as the case may be; that is to say, as they may happen to be on earth when He comes, or to be beneath the earth.

The antithesis here pointed out between the human body and the Spirit of Christ, is of frequent occurrence in the Scriptures. Thus, in Col. ii. 11, 12, "In whom ye are circumcised in the *putting off the body* of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ"—i.e., this sinful and fleshly body (see our early illustration of this usage,) by his circumcision, buried with him, risen with him, through faith of the operation of God. Again, in Peter, "being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."

It is clear that this text can refer neither to the human bodies of the living saints, nor to the body of their corruptions; for neither of these are dead.

How Baptism "saves" us, 1 Pet. iii. 21.

Suppose we take it thus: our Lord ordained that he that believed and was baptised should be *saved*, Mark xvi. 16. St. Paul recognised this rule, affirming "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be *saved*," Rom. x. 9. Here he seems to refer to public baptism where alone the formal and accredited "confession" can be made, and where reference is had to resurrection in the use of water.

Again, the rule is illustrated in St. Paul's own case—"And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptised, and *wash away thy sins* calling on the name of the Lord." Wherever this confession, or profession, is made in baptism, the heart going with it, there is St. Peter's "*answer* of a good conscience by the Lord's resurrection," in the above text. It is the pardoned, purified, triumphant heart, prompting the lips, and inspiring the voice. From these passages it appears as a general, not universal, rule, there is no salvation without baptism; for that is the profession of Christ. Thus, it is said in

the Catechism to be "generally necessary to salvation"—and baptism must always be taken to include and imply this "answer of a good conscience" through that shedding forth of the Holy Spirit consequent upon the Lord's resurrection, and exaltation; otherwise, it does *not* save.

We are hindered from realising how Baptism saves, as the early Church realised and gloried in it, by our habit of baptising infants only. We see it better if we add to Infant Baptism its necessary compliment—namely, Confirmation.

When we put the two together, we see the young person not only "*sealed*" with water (the early Church called it being sealed, Eusebius, bk. iv. ch. 5), but we also see the instruction following on desire, and the sense of want, and the "hunger and thirst after righteousness" of our Lord, and the holy anxiety which leads to the prolonged and serious frequenting the means of grace. And this goes on often for a time in the dark, till at length truth enters, "flashing through the mind like lightning," says Clemens Alexandrinus. And *generally* this entrance of truth is about this time, when the understanding comes to its maturity, and when Confirmation is *about*. Careless minds are out of the question: *they* get nothing at Confirmation.

Perhaps we may take an illustration of the truth that baptism saves, from the sun. The sun is an opaque body, most likely of the same substance as our earth, only in a different condition. We *know* that like our earth it is metallic; for the new and wonderful discovery of spectrum-analysis, proves it beyond doubt. Well, let the opaque body of the sun represent the element of water in baptism—then observe, that all the light of the world is diffused around it; and most, nearest; till at its very circumference, its intensity, as Shakespeare sings, "declines to be deep search'd by saucy looks."

Even thus it is now; and more apparently was, at first, in the early Church; and for a man to be baptised then, was for him visibly and courageously to come out of the kingdom of darkness, and enter into the kingdom of God's dear Son, and to be "baptised into Christ;" and not come by *night* to Jesus, as Nicodemus did. It is baptism and its *concomitants* that saves; or "baptism *together with* faith," as the old expression goes.

Tenby. E. N. S.

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The Teacher in his School.

A TEACHER'S FIRST SUNDAY AT SCHOOL.

The difference between an experienced and an inexperienced teacher is very apparent to a spectator who watches them when teaching, and by none is it more sensibly felt than by the new comer himself, who, if he happen to look up in the midst of his perplexities and distress, wonders how his experienced fellow-teacher manages to avoid so successfully the difficulties which appear to him insuperable. This difference, however, is in a great measure made up of little things. Both these teachers may be to an equal extent actuated by pure Christian zeal, both alike anxious to fulfil their Saviour's command and feed His lambs, yet one may seem to meet with no difficulties, and the other to be labouring altogether in vain. To the latter, I offer a few plain and simple suggestions, with the hope that they may, in some slight measure, tend to soften down the roughness of a teacher's early path. My object is not now to enforce the spiritual preparation of the heart by prayer and study, without which a teacher had better not enter the school, but rather to give a few hints on matters which, though of secondary importance to yourselves, are of vital consequence to the children.

I will suppose, then, that having consented to become a teacher in a Sunday School, you find the time has come for your first essay in the work, and that having sought a blessing from on high, you set off to the school.

In the first place, be in good time. It is not punctuality to enter the school-door just as the superintendent's bell rings for prayer, for the result of this will generally be, that your class, having arrived before you, have had their own uncontrolled will for some ten minutes, talking and laughing, and perhaps, under various pretences, walking about the room, to the serious annoyance of the whole school. It is much better and easier to prevent (prævenio, to come before) disorder than to quell it. Be at the school ten minutes before the hour for beginning teaching. If the superintendent be up to his work, he will be there before you, generally at the opening of the door. After a friendly greeting with your fellow-teachers, go to your class at once, and make up your mind not to leave it till school is over.

Your boys will now be arriving one by one. Have a word for each. At first it will be to know their names and address (to be entered in your note book), and afterwards a simple question or two about their lessons, or an enquiry after their parents, brothers, or

sisters. Boys and girls are almost always pleased with these little courtesies, and remember you must try to make them think you a friend, or your teaching will lose half its force.

The ten minutes will soon be gone, and the bell rings for prayer or singing. See that your boys all stand up or kneel down together, as the rule may be. They must be placed so that you see them all; whether at prayers or when teaching, never have a boy behind your back. If you see a boy inattentive or beginning to whisper, catch his eye, and *look* silence. If this does not stop him, hold up your finger, and if that fails (through his avoiding your eye) touch him lightly, so as to let him know you are watching him. I have known a boy, when thus checked in several attempts to accomplish some trick he had set his mind on, give up at last with a good-humoured smile, which seemed to say, "It's of no use, teacher is up to me." This, however, will not always be enough, for boys are not always so manageable; but continued misconduct should be followed, not by a pinch or a box on the ear (which only irritates, but does not subdue), but by a bad mark, or, last of all, by a complaint to the superintendent.

Do not let the boys move about in the class, which they will often do to look over the book of a favourite class-mate. Make each boy keep his place, whether sitting or standing, with his face towards you and his feet quite still. Shuffling the feet causes more than half the noise in a school-room.

Prayers over, you sit down to teach, and you find you want Bibles. Never think of fetching them yourself, so as to give your class a short holiday. It will most probably be an expensive one to yourself. Neither say "who will fetch the books?" half the boys will shout out, "I will," and be over the forms before you know what they are about. Fix on a boy and say, "Robert, fetch the Bibles," etc.

You look now at the school rules, and most probably will find that the collect has to be repeated; but whatever the lesson may be, make the boys all stand up in a semicircle. Some, it may be feared, will be conning it over for the first time, but you must not keep the diligent ones waiting for the idle, and on no account take an individual repetition. If you do, a clever boy will run through his lessons, and then (taking him as a tolerable specimen of *order*) sit with his hands before him, and tell the superintendent, as one told me the other day, that he has nothing to do. The boys who are not ready with their lessons, must listen whilst the others repeat, and *all* can join in the explanation or instruction you give.

"Let those boys who know their collects, hold up their hands;" say, half do so. "Robert, begin." He repeats the first clause;

stop him, and motion to the next boy to take up the thread. This being done two or three times, you find out the degree of exactness with which each has learnt it. Then follow your explanation, questions, and references to parts of Scripture in proof and illustration.

Whilst this is done, the boys may sit. A *change* of posture is necessary at times, as you may judge by recalling your own disposition to *fidget*, when at their age, but accustom them to make it without noise or talking.

If you want a Scripture reference, do not let half a dozen boys begin reading the text at once, or the noise will be intolerable. But —"I want a text in Daniel iv., to show that God is Almighty; Robert, read the 23rd verse, and then, Alfred, the 35th."

You may notice a boy's eye wandering to the next class; if so, instead of boxing his ears, say to him, "James, instead of looking about you, just find Gen. xvii. 1, and read it." If a boy is restless, let him stand by your side a few minutes; you need not tell him to do so in an angry tone; do not wait till the mischief is gone so far, but say, "Charles, you are getting tired, come and stand here two or three minutes." A hand laid gently on his shoulder, and kept there a minute or two, will often have a sedative influence, but the grand thing is to give such a boy something to think of.

You must never suffer talking among the boys. This does not exclude questions which an intelligent boy will sometimes put to his teacher, to the benefit of himself and his class-mates, but take care that those questions are *to the point;* and if they are not, say, "ask me that another time, it has nothing to do with the lesson."

Your class ought not to consist of more than eight or ten boys, ten on the list, which will generally be only seven or eight in attendance. These you will find quite enough, and if you make them sit four opposite you, and two on each side, you can see and hear them all with ease.

If the boys are not carefully trained on this particular point in their day school, you will find them read *very loudly*. Then the boys in other classes must do the same, the necessity extends itself to the teachers, and gradually the whole school rings with the sound, and the superintendent, as he stands at his desk, can hear half a dozen different readers trying to drown each other's voices. Each teacher is capable of doing something to remedy this. Say to a boy, "you are reading to me, not to the other teachers; they do not want to hear you." The fault is as much in what musicians call the *pitch* of the voice as in the exertion; but those who know nothing of music can yet readily distinguish the painfully high tone of which I am complaining, from the chastened voice of boys who have been better trained.

The way in which the *books* are treated must not be beneath your notice; but I pass on to the close of school, a time at which order and disorder stand out in more marked contrast than at any other. There is a strong desire on the part of the boys (such as most of us may remember in ourselves) to escape from the school-room, as soon as school is over. If a teacher does not check the practical exhibition of this desire, it will plunge the class and school into great confusion. The boys will be observed not even to hear the prayers out, before they are looking for their caps, and as soon as a movement is made, they will all make the best of their way to the door in noisy confusion. A teacher's responsibility for the behaviour of his class commences when the first boy enters the school, and does not cease till the last boy has left it. I would say then, as soon as the bell rings for close of school, collect the books, and send them up by one boy, mark your class register, then take the same care during prayers as I have before spoken of. When prayers are over, make the boys immediately *sit down*. Their caps will either be on pegs near the door, or if there be none, the boys should put them under the forms on which they are sitting. The latter way is the best; but you must not suffer a single cap to be touched till you give the signal. If the caps hang near the door, on no account let the boys go for them; make them wait till they are actually leaving. This may seem a trifle, but in Sunday Schools, as elsewhere, trifles are often of importance. I have seen a school thrown into intolerable disorder by the boys running in every direction to get their caps.

The classes have, probably, an appointed order for leaving. Wait till your turn comes, keeping the boys *sitting*, then make them rise simultaneously, and *walk* out of the school in an orderly file. You may find it well sometimes to walk with them to the door, but in a little time your eye will be enough. When the last boy has left, then, and *not till then*, may you find time for the interchange of those little courtesies with your fellow-teachers which sympathy may suggest and the day allow.

I will sum up my remarks on what may be called a teacher's *physical* qualifications, by describing these to be,—a capacity to distinguish between order and disorder, a love of the former, a resolute intention of repressing the latter at any cost of trouble to himself, a quick eye and ear, and a firm, decided manner, made up of mingled authority and kindness.

I. C. J.

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AN ADDRESS ON THE RIGHT USE OF TIME.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,

As I see there are some little children in this room, as well as many who are nearly past the age of childhood, besides some who will soon leave this school—some of whom may be engaged in the honourable and useful calling of servants—some may perhaps go away from us into foreign lands—some may perhaps be settled down at a distance from this school—some will go one way and some another;—and as we know not how soon some of you may depart from amongst us, it is my intention to speak to you about a subject, which we are too apt to forget; what that subject is, I will tell you presently, for I have two or three words to say to you before I fairly begin.

Some boys and girls *understand* many things they hear, but as they do not *think* as well as *hear*, they forget to *act*. Supposing I wanted to go into the west of England, and instead of going the road that would take me there, I were to go the road that led to the north of England—and suppose I had walked a good many miles on the road, when some kind friend met me and showed me that I was on the wrong road, and to convince me, took a map out of his pocket and pointed out to me which road I ought to take;—how very careful should I be to try and *understand* him, and when he was gone, I think I should try to remember what he said, and I am pretty sure that I should soon *do as he told me*, and turn back from the wrong road, and try to walk in the right one; this is what I want all of *you* to do, to walk in the right road, even that which leads to heaven.

Now I want you all, every one of you, to do three things, the first is to "listen," the second is to "think," and the third is to "act." And I have no doubt that if we *listen* attentively, *think* carefully, and *act* prayerfully, we shall be much happier than we are now.

We all have *something* in our own possession that does not actually belong to us, and yet we do not borrow it, we have not stolen it, we cannot lend it to anybody else, if we want any more of it, we cannot purchase it, and as we shall require all that we call ours, we cannot sell it. We cannot exchange it for anything else, for it is more valuable than either money, food, or clothes. We cannot do anything without it; we do not know how much we have of it. Some make a good use of it; some make a bad use of it. *All* ought to use it *carefully*, for it is very dangerous to use it *carelessly*; and WE *must* give an account of what we have done with it, and *how* we have used it; for this something is only lent *to* us to *use*, and if we *misuse* it, what shall we do? or what shall we be able to say?

But what is this something? Why, it is nothing more or less than TIME. And never forget, my dear children, that *all* of you, *each* of you individually, *one* by *one*, MUST say what *you* have done with *your* time; and when you are tempted to waste it, remember that "I shall have to say *what* I have *done* with my time," and if thus you think, I hope you will find something to do that ought to be done, and then do it diligently and with all your might.

We have, all of us, old and young, been too often guilty of the sin of wasting our time. But because we *have* done wrong, is *that* any reason why we should *continue* to do wrong? I am sure it is not. And as to-morrow

does not belong to us, suppose we all of us leave off wasting our time, and commence at once to use it, and not abuse it.

Do you all know what *Time* is? Time is a portion of Eternity. Time had a beginning and it will have an end, but can any of you tell me when eternity will end?

Children. Never, teacher; eternity will never end.

Do you all know what *waste* is? Suppose some of you tell me what you mean when you say, *waste* of time. I want the meaning of *waste?*

Children. Being idle, teacher. Playing when you ought to be working.

Your meanings are very true, as far as they go, but I can tell you a simpler meaning of the word "waste." Waste means *misuse*, that is, a wrong use of time, so that when I say *waste of time* what do I mean?

Children. Misuse of time, teacher.

Some people and some children misuse their time *wilfully*, some do it *carelessly*, some do it *ignorantly*, and some feel nearly sure that *they* NEVER waste *their* time, and yet sometimes they are the worst wasters of any.

All who waste their time act just as Satan wishes them to do, because if we are not engaged in God's work we shall soon be doing Satan's work,—

"For Satan finds some mischief still
For *idle* hands to do."

In order to quite understand the meaning of these words,—viz., "Waste of Time," we will divide the subject into three parts, and consider each part by itself.

Firstly—*Why* Time is wasted.

Secondly—*How* Time is wasted.

Thirdly—Why Time ought *not* to be wasted.

Now you will all be able to remember these three heads or parts; and, firstly,

WHY time is wasted.

A good *many* reasons *might* be given, but no *good* reason *can* be stated to *excuse anybody* for wasting his time; so that it cannot be defended in any shape whatever, and I think myself that when our time is wasted it is because we forget that beautiful sentence in the XVI. chapter of Genesis. If you will turn to your Bibles you will find it in the 13th verse,—"Thou God seest me."

If every boy and girl thought God saw *all* they did, and if everybody—old and young—thought, each one to himself, "God's eye is upon me now," what very different scenes would be visible! What a deal more good would be done by us all! I wish, my dear children, that *you*—all of you, you little ones as well as you elder ones,—would *all* treasure up those four words in your memories, and when you are tempted to waste your time, may it please the Holy Spirit to bring to your remembrance—"Thou God seest ME."

II. How Time is wasted.

When children are IDLE they waste their time, and it is very possible to be very ACTIVE and yet waste time. I will try to explain how it is possible to be very active and yet waste time.

Suppose I wanted to fill a tub with some water, and instead of going to a well of clean water, I went to a well of dirty water, and instead of using a bucket to get up the water from the well, I used a sieve, how long would it be before I should fill my tub with water?

Children. You would never fill it, teacher.

Not if I worked hard all day?

Children. No, teacher.

Why?

Children. Because a sieve won't hold water.

So that although I worked very hard, yet I should waste my time in trying to do an impossibility.

Again: supposing I wanted to go to the next town, and started away from home, walking very fast some little distance; well, just as I passed the corner

of the lane, I saw a beautiful butterfly and I ran away across the fields after it, and before I managed to catch it, I saw another, and so on, till I had spent nearly all day chasing butterflies, instead of going upon my errand, should I deserve to be called *lazy*? No; for I might be very tired with being so very active, and yet my sin would be "that I had WASTED my time," because I had not *used* it, but *misused* it.

Again: supposing I was very thirsty, and somebody told me that just one mile off there was a nice spring of clear fresh water, and the sea was just two miles off, I think that if I went to the sea instead of the spring to quench my thirst, you might well say "what a waste of time!"

And yet, my dear children, you all waste your time in those three ways; you are like the foolish man with a sieve, like him with the butterflies, and you are continually trying to quench your thirst with drinking salt water.

If you ask me how? I will tell you.

You know that although I could get no *water* out of the well with my sieve, yet if there was any filth, stones, or straw, or anything that was *useless*, I should be able to get that up. Now there are many books, which, I am sorry to say, some wicked men have printed, some on purpose for young people, and some for little children; and I am still more sorry to say that many children read them, and their memories are like the sieve, the books are like the well, and they are too often full of filth and nonsense, and the sieves get full of these things; and the little good that there might be in a very few of the books, is left in the well, and if their memories were like buckets instead of sieves, the water would be filthy and useless; is it not a waste of time therefore, to *read* bad books? If you say "I don't know what is bad," bring your books to your teachers, and I am sure they will be soon able to tell you whether your book is like a dirty well, or a clean well.

But it is possible that some children (especially you elder ones) may know by reading the book,—not all of it, but only a few lines; and when your conscience tells you that you have no business reading that book, when (as I have seen before now) you shut it up and hide it if teacher should call on you; you may depend upon it *you have no business with that book*. It is one of the devil's traps. *Have nothing to do with it*. And when you are tempted to open it again, remember "that God sees you," and beware.

It is possible to read good books and yet waste time, for although a good book is like a well of clear water, yet if our memories are like sieves, it is labour lost, it is waste of time. But, perhaps you will say, "I have got a bad memory, I cannot help myself." I say "you can,"—you never forget when it is dinner time, and why should you forget more important things; if you say, "My memory is like a sieve," I will tell you what one of my boys told me one Sunday. I asked him—"Can you draw up water out of a well with a sieve?" "O, yes, teacher!" "How?" "*Why I could put something over the bottom of the sieve.*" Now just try, you bad memories, to put something over the bottom of them.

But perhaps you will say, "Well, if I am guilty that way, I am certain that when I am sent on errands I don't go catching butterflies." But are you quite sure? When you have a lesson to learn, do you not *sometimes play* instead? When your employers send you on errands do you *never* stop to look at the pictures, to see the tumblers, or some other nonsense? Do you never stop to gossip? Do you always do as you are bid? No. I am very sure you ought to do as you are told, but I am very nearly sure that you very often do not. And when your kind teachers, Sunday after Sunday, come here and try to teach you the way to heaven, how I should like to see you all atten-

tive to them. But it is not so. Some of you are too fond of butterflies, you are listless, restless, and careless; and if you are so you are wasting your time. Think upon this, my dear children, and remember that in *all* places "God sees you."

But you may think that "if you were thirsty you would certainly prefer the spring water, and would certainly not go two miles for salt water when you might get the other so much easier." But how many of you are trying to quench your thirst with salt water! For what are sinful pleasures but salt water? The more time you waste in drinking them the more thirsty you become, and the more you want, and the more you will want. My dear children, do not waste your time in drinking salt water—that is, indulging in what the world calls pleasure, but what the Bible calls sin, and you know that God hates sin. But do, I entreat you, if you are thirsty, go to the stream that is always flowing, the well that is always pure, the spring that is always running and is never dry,—I mean your Bible. You cannot read it carefully, and prayerfully, and thoughtfully, without being refreshed. Then *why* waste your time in drinking SALT water?

But active persons and idle persons are equally guilty when they both are guilty of the same offence, and if you do that which is against the law, and if you leave undone that which the law requires to be done, you are guilty. If you sleep away your time, you sin. If you idle away your time, you sin. If you abuse or misuse your time, you sin, and "be sure your sin will find you out." I never knew a lazy boy who made much progress. I never knew an idle boy who did any good, and I never knew a wicked boy give any joy to his parents.

And I am sure if you were to sit down and think, when you get home, and put down how you waste your time, you would be astonished; and you would be then better able to perceive—

III. Why Time ought not to be wasted.

And this, dear children, is the most solemn part of my subject, and requires great attention on your part.

God is a God of strict and perfect justice, and yet is He full of mercy, long-suffering, and gracious; else we had not been here to-day. Time ought not to be wasted, because life is uncertain—death is certain. *I* must die, *you* must die—are *you* ready? Do you know *when* you are to die? And if you are ready, are all of your family—your brothers and sisters—are they ready? And if not why stand ye all the day idle?

Life is given to us to prepare for *death*, *time* is given to us to prepare for *eternity*; and as you are all certain that you cannot get ready for eternity after death, why act so madly as to waste *any portion* of time? Why should we spend our time about the little, paltry things of this world, when we have not obtained the one thing needful? And time ought not to be wasted,—for once gone it is gone for ever!

In conclusion, I would add a few words of advice to you all. Esteem your Bibles as the most precious of all books. Value your Time as a gift which God has given you to use so that His glory may be magnified, and His kingdom extended. Beware of attempting to serve two masters,—you know who I mean—God and Satan. You cannot use a little time, and misuse a little time, and think that plan is a safe one. You must serve God or you must serve Satan. God permits and suffers us to call Him Father. Satan is the hardest and most tyrannical of masters, and he hates "Our Father." Choose you, this day,—whom will ye serve? And if you say, "Our Father is my God"—beware that you waste not your time, lest He—coming suddenly—might stop you in the very act of rebellion; for it is the act of a rebel to profess allegiance to one king and give his goods to that king's enemy. Beware then that you waste not your Time.

L. R. S.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES ON THE INVITATIONS. IV.

"Look unto Me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else." Is. XLV. 22.

DEAR CHILDREN,

THE very words of this invitation stamp its divinity, and it seems to form a connecting link between the Mosaic and Gospel dispensations; for in thought we are carried back to the time when the great Lawgiver raised a serpent of brass, and proclaimed by God's command in the ears of perishing thousands "*Look* and *live*," and forward to the time when Jordan's once solitary banks echoed to the Baptist's cry, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world!"

I.

1. *The guests. All the ends of the earth.* There is no limit in God's mind when the Gospel message is proclaimed, for salvation is His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus, Eph. iii. 11. And though this view is very comprehensive, yet, it must be correct, for it is the Saviour's own, John iii. 16. Isaiah tells us how it is God's predeterminate intention to separate from among the Gentiles a people for Himself; see, too, the words of the sweet psalmist of Israel, Ps. ii. 8. The aged Simeon rightly understood that Christ's coming *then* was to fulfil Isaiah's *prophecy*, Is. ix. 1—2, "A light to lighten the Gentiles."

"And *I*, if *I* be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me," John xii. 32, 33. We are told that these words were spoken by Jesus with special reference to the death He should die, and if we connect them with His words to Nicodemus, John iii. 14, we see clearly how the serpent of brass lifted up by Moses in the wilderness, was a fitting emblem of Him. "Cursed is the serpent above all cattle, and above every beast of the field," said God, Gen. iii. 14. And Jesus, as the Son of Man, literally became a curse for us, Gal. iii. 13. Now one object of Christ's death was, that He should be a sacrifice or propitiation for the sins of the whole world, 1 John ii. 2; and those of us upon whom the ends of the world are come, whose eyes the Lord hath opened, see clearly the meaning, not only of the type as raised by Moses in the wilderness, but also of the antitype when on Calvary He "poured out His righteous soul an offering for sin." This sacrifice which we can never understand in all its fulness till we reach the "home prepared" for us by redeeming love, is the measure of God's love to sinners. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." Jesus Himself speaks these words, and He alone the "first-born among many brethren" *knows all* the fulness of our Father's love.

2. *The terms. Salvation!* "For there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved." The Jews were essentially a selfish people, and very jealous of allowing the Gentiles to partake in any of their privileges. The doctrine of the cross, in itself distasteful, seemed even more so because Jesus and His Apostles plainly said that the middle wall of partition was broken down, Eph. ii. 14; so that the same peace might be preached to them which were afar off, and to them which were nigh, Eph. ii. 17. When St. Paul was making his memorable defence on the castle steps, Acts xxii., the Jews gave heed till he said, "he was sent far hence unto the Gentiles," 21st ver. *All* flesh have sinned and come short of His glory; so, when His only begotten Son took our nature upon Him, "He

was called Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins," Matt. i. 21. From sin we are naturally led on to its punishment, which we find in Ezek. xviii. 20; yet, by this invitation, to "look and live," God vindicates the truth of what He Himself declares in the 32nd verse, "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?"

II.

1. *The preparation.* Surely, dear children, here our Catechism helps us, "Repentance whereby we forsake sin." Not till the Israelites confessed that they had sinned did God provide a remedy, Num. xxi. 8; and then faith is needed to take hold of God's remedy. To as many as looked, God gave power to be healed, and so Jesus, if we believe on His name, gives us power to become the sons of God, John i. 12.

2. *The answer.* Surely, dear children, we may learn from Bartimeus what this should be! Mark x. 46. We are so blinded by sin that, when we see Jesus, "there is no beauty in Him that we should desire Him;" and, except we say to Him, "Lord, that I may receive my sight," we shall be unable to "behold Him as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." Jesus calls us *now*; let us be of good comfort, and ask Him to "open our eyes, that we may behold the wondrous things written in His law," Ps. cxix.

H. S.

The Sky-Lark.

I HAVE seen a lark rising from his bed of grass and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds: but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest than it could recover by the liberation and frequent weighing of its wings, till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing as if it had learned music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministries herebelow.

So is the prayer of a good man; when his affairs have required business, and his business was a matter of discipline, and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duty met with the infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument, and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent and raised a tempest, and over-ruled the man; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up towards a cloud; and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention; and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose that prayer, he must recover it when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God: and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy dove, and dwells with God till it returns, like the useful bee, laden with a blessing and the dew of heaven.

Jeremy Taylor.

SOWING AND REAPING.

A Harvest Lesson to an Adult Bible Class.

T. Do you all remember what is to be our subject this evening?

S. The Harvest.

T. Yes; and I should like you each one to repeat the verse you have chosen.

1st S. Matt. xiii. 30, "Let both grow together until the harvest, and in the time of harvest I will say to my reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."

2nd S. Matt. xiii. 38, 39, "The field is the world, the good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels."

3rd S. Luke x. 2, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest."

4th S. John iv. 35, 36, "Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

5th S. Ruth i. 22, "So Naomi returned, and Ruth, the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab, and they came to Bethlehem, in the beginning of barley harvest."

6th S. Ruth ii. 23, "So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz, to glean until the end of barley harvest, and of wheat harvest."

7th S. Jer. viii. 20, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

8th S. 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10, "It is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen, or saith He it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he that ploweth should plow in hope, and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope."

9th S. Joel iii. 13, "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe."

10th S. Ps. lxv. 11, 12, "Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness; and Thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness, and the little hills rejoice on every side."

11th S. Rev. xiv. 15, 16, "And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap, for the time has come for thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped."

12th S. Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

13th S. Hos. x. 12, "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy, break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you.

[The verses out of Ruth were selected by the two youngest of the class].

T. Well, you have selected a number of very nice verses about the harvest; but do you know why I have fixed upon that subject for to-night?

S. Because there has just been such an abundant harvest.

T. Yes; and it is not only because the harvest calls for special thankfulness to God, but because it is in itself such a

beautiful thing. The harvest teaches us so many lessons of God's loving care and goodness, and we read so much about it in Scripture, that I think we shall do well to spend this evening in studying the lessons which it teaches us; and first tell me what is required to produce the harvest?

S. The seed must be sown.

T. Who by?

S. The farmer.

T. Yes, sowing is man's work; but is there anything else he has to do besides sowing the seed?

S. He must plough—he must prepare the ground.

T. True, he must plough and prepare the ground—he must sow the seed, and watch that the birds of the air do not pick it up; but when was it first ordained that men should work in this way for their bread?

S. After Adam's fall.

T. Yes; in the garden of Eden grew every tree that was good for food. It was after Adam's sin that this kind of work was appointed, see Gen. iii. 18, 19.

S. "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

T. Let us remember, always, that there is a blessing in all honest labour, and we should feel thankful that God has given us work to do. You have told me what man must do to produce a harvest, but is nothing else required?

S. Sunshine, rain.

T. And where must we look for this?

S. To God.

T. Have we any promise to depend upon?

S. "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust," Matt. v. 45.

T. True; but do you not remember any promise earlier in the Bible? Turn to Gen. viii. and read the 22nd verse.

S. "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease."

T. What does every farmer expect when he sows the seed?

S. That it will spring up and grow.

T. Yes; you see sowing is in itself an act of faith. The farmer expects the seed to spring up, but he can do nothing to make it grow;—we are absolutely dependent upon God's blessing. He sends the sunshine and the rain, the seed-time and the harvest; see Psalm lxv. 9, 10.

S. "Thou visitest the earth and waterest it; thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water; thou preparest them corn when thou hast so provided for it; thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; thou settlest the furrows thereof; thou makest it soft with showers; thou blessest the springing thereof."

T. Now can you tell me of some people, who for a great number of years never sowed a single seed, or reaped a single harvest, yet never were without bread to eat?

S. The children of Israel in the wilderness.

T. And you all know how they were supplied, and for how long a time?

S. With manna from heaven, for forty years.

T. You see God could supply their wants in any way He thought best, and when they reached the land of Canaan, special thanksgivings were ordered for the harvest. Exodus xxiii. 16, 19.

S. "The feast of harvest, the first fruits of thy labours which thou hast sown in the field, and the feast of ingathering which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field. The first of the first-fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God."

T. And Leviticus xxiii. 10, 11, 14.

S. "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them,—when ye be come

into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you, and ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the self-same day that ye have brought an offering unto your God."

T. In many parts of England there are harvest homes, and thanksgiving services now. I was in a country Church last week, where there had just been a harvest thanksgiving. In the porch there was still standing a beautiful sheaf of corn bound round with evergreens, just as it had been brought in and placed upon the Lord's table on the thanksgiving day. We like to see these things, not because they are especially commanded us, but because they remind us of our entire dependence upon God, and help to make us more thankful to Him for His daily mercies. Perhaps some day we shall have harvest thanksgivings in London, and I am sure we have all great cause for thankfulness. Who were especially cared for at the harvest time? See Levit. xxiii. 22; and Deut. xxiv. 19.

S. "When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of the harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor and to the stranger." "When thou cuttest down thy harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the Lord thy God may bless thee, in all the work of thine hands."

T. The poor, the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless were not to be forgotten, but might glean what they could in the harvest field. Do you remember a beautiful story in the Bible about a gleaner?

S. Ruth gleaning in the fields of Boaz.

T. When the harvest fails what is the consequence?

S. Bread is very dear, there is a famine.

T. Do you remember reading of any famines in the Bible?

S. There was a famine when Joseph's brethren went into Egypt to buy corn.

T. Yes; and you all know how that famine helped to work out God's great purposes, and to prove that all things work together for good to those that love God. Do you remember another famine which was sent in the time of a great prophet? See 1 Kings xvii.

S. In the time of Elijah.

T. Yes; who was the king then?

S. Ahab.

T. What sort of a king was he?

S. A very wicked king.

T. And the famine was sent as a judgment upon the land. But how was the prophet provided for?

S. He lived by a brook, and the ravens fed him.

T. And after the brook dried up?

S. God sent him to a widow, and she kept him.

T. Yes; and while the famine lasted the barrel of meal never wasted, neither did the cruse of oil fail. God supplied them without any harvest. Do you remember another famine in the time of Elisha?

(No answers being given to this portion, the teacher supplied the narrative).

The town of Samaria was besieged by the enemies of Israel. So long had this lasted that all their provisions were gone, and the people were starving. In the midst of this, Elisha stands before the king, and says, "To-morrow about this time, shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel." It seemed so impossible that fine flour should be so cheap the very next day that the lord on whose arm the king was leaning said it might be possible if the Lord would make windows in heaven. But Elisha

told him that he should see it with his eyes, but should not eat thereof. That very night God made the camp of the Syrians hear a great noise, and thinking that the people of Israel were pursuing them, they arose and fled, leaving all their provisions behind; and so it came to pass that—without any harvest—a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel; but the unbelieving lord on whose hand the king leaned was trod upon by the crowd till he died.

We have said that famines were sometimes sent as a judgment upon a land; now, if you look to the prophet Haggai you will see that for one particular sin God sent this judgment upon them, read chapter i., verses 6, 9, 10.

S. "Ye have sown much and bring in little; ye looked for much, and lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit."

T. Why was it that the earth was stayed from her fruit?

S. Because of God's house that was waste.

T. Yes, by not building up and restoring God's temple the people showed how little love they had for God's honour and service. Now you will find a special blessing upon the harvest promised in the same prophet, chapter ii. 15, 16, 18, 19.

S. "And now, I pray you, consider from this day and upward, from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the Lord: since those days were when one came to an heap of twenty measures, there were but ten: when one came to the press-fat for to draw out fifty vessels out of the press, there were but twenty. Consider now from this day and upward, from the four-and-twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid, consider it. Is the seed yet in the barn? Yea, as yet the vine, and the fig-tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive-tree have not brought forth: from this day will I bless you."

T. So you see they were told to look back to times when there were only ten measures instead of twenty; and then take notice that God would bless them from the day, the very day that they showed their love to Him by laying the foundation of His house. But the Bible tells us of a worse famine than this, Amos viii. 11.

S. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."

T. Now we are taught in Scripture that the harvest is God's gift, and that we ought to praise Him for it; see Jer. v. 24.

S. "Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the Lord our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in His season; He reserves unto us the appointed weeks of harvest."

T. And there are some verses we frequently hear in Church, in which, if we would look to the earth to bring forth her increase, we are taught to praise God.

S. "Let the people praise Thee, O God; yea, let all the people praise Thee. Then shall the earth bring forth her increase, and God, even our own God, shall give us His blessing," Psalm lxvii. 5, 6.

T. Do we ever pray for a blessing on the harvest?

S. Yes; in the Litany.

T. What do we ask God to give and preserve to our use?

S. The kindly fruits of the earth, so as in due season we may enjoy them.

T. We hear these words so frequently that, perhaps, we do not think as much

about them as we ought to do; but it is well for us to remember that the kindly fruits of the earth are God's gift to us, which we may well ask Him to preserve to our use.

Now, I have said that we are especially called upon to thank God for the present abundant harvest, and there is one particular reason why, in this year 1863, we should be more than usually thankful for the harvest. I dare say you know that all the corn which is used in England does not all grow in England. Do you know from what country we used to receive a large supply of corn?

S. From America.

T. And on account of the dreadful war, we shall not now have the usual supply of corn; therefore had it not been for this great harvest, the bread would this winter have been at a price which it would have almost frightened your parents to think about. You know, far better than I can tell you, how great a calamity it is when bread is dear, when four loaves cost as much as six would have done, and working people can scarcely provide enough for their families.

How thankful we ought to be that God has preserved us from this! We have lost the American cotton, and you know what has been the consequence in this country?

S. It has brought great distress in Lancashire, and the north of England.

T. Yes; we have lost the American cotton, and we know how much we miss that—we shall lose the American corn, but we shall *not* miss that, for God has graciously made it up to us in the present abundant harvest.

But we must pass on now to notice shortly the lessons which the harvest teaches us. There are several things in Scripture compared to sowing and reaping, and first read Gal. vi. 7, 8.

S. "Be not deceived. God is not mocked,—for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

T. When a man sows barley or wheat in his field, what does he expect to reap from it?

S. Barley and wheat.

T. True, just as our Lord says, "Men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles." It is true in spiritual things as in natural, that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. Now when is the seed time for this kind of sowing?

S. Our lives.

T. And in what sense do we sow?

S. By our conduct.

T. And what is meant by sowing to the flesh?

S. Doing what is wrong.

T. There are some other verses which speak of sowing and reaping in this sense. Read Job iv. 8.

S. "Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same."

T. And Prov. xxii. 8.

S. "He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity."

T. It is a solemn thought that whatever we do, is in some way like sown seed, of which we shall hereafter reap the fruit. The child who gives way to deceit and falsehood, is sowing seed which will spring up and bear bitter fruit; and it is so whenever we yield to sinful thoughts, or angry words, or unholy feelings, it is sowing iniquity to reap vanity. But there are some other verses which will explain what is meant by sowing to the Spirit, read Prov. xi. 18. "The wicked worketh a deceitful work, but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward." Then there was the verse we heard before, "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy." We read in Scripture many examples of those who thus sowed in righteousness. Why did Moses refuse to be called the Son of Pharoah's daughter?

S. Because he chose rather to suffer

affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season.

T. This was sowing in righteousness, and why did he make this choice?

S. He esteemed the reproach of Christ, greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt.

T. And he was called to be the chosen leader of God's people Israel. Ruth, too, was one who sowed in righteousness, when she said to her mother-in-law, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God;" and she reaped her sure reward in "trusting under the wings of the Lord God of Israel." But how may you and I be amongst those who sow to the Spirit, sow in righteousness?

S. By praying for God's Spirit; by having the Spirit in our hearts.

T. Oh! if with all our hearts we are seeking God, asking Him to cleanse us from sin, to put His Spirit into our hearts, to lead us in His way, then may we, indeed, be sowing to the Spirit; and what is it promised that we shall reap?

S. Everlasting life.

T. Think what a blessed reaping that will be; but let us remember that it is *now* in this life we must thus sow; it will be too late afterwards; there will be some who will say, "the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

But there is something else in Scripture which is compared to sowing?

S. Spreading God's word and truth.

T. Yes; you all remember the parable of the sower and the seed, and the different kinds of ground on which it fell. Who are sowers now?

S. Those who preach and teach.

T. It is of this kind of sowing we read in 1 Cor. iii. 7.

S. "So, then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

T. And there is a promise to those who thus sow. Gal. vi. 9.

S. "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

T. It was of this kind of sowing our Lord was speaking when He looked upon the fields, white already to harvest, and the thought of another and a far greater harvest. What did He mean?

S. A harvest of souls.

T. And it was of this harvest that He said one might sow and another reap, but the time would come when both he that soweth and he that reapeth should rejoice together. That day of rejoicing may not, perhaps, come in this life; but when will it be sure to come?

S. In the kingdom of heaven.

T. But sometimes, even in this world, we may find how true the promise is, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." You remember St. Paul at Philippi; we might call that sowing in tears when he was beaten, imprisoned, his feet made fast in the stocks, but he lived to reap in joy. If you take notice you will find that the Epistle to the Philippians, which he wrote years afterwards, is full of joy and rejoicing from beginning to end. "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say rejoice." "In every prayer of mine for you all I make request with joy. And now, at the last, I rejoice that your care for me hath flourished again." He had gone forth amongst them bearing precious seed; and these Philippian converts, who filled his heart with rejoicing were the goodly sheaves which had grown from that seed. But how may you and I be sowers now?

S. By doing good;—by trying to lead others to Christ.

T. Yes; that is the best and highest good. But we may be sowing good seed in our daily life, by our conduct and conversation, by setting a good example to others, and as we have opportunity trying to lead them to Jesus. Scripture says, "Blessed are they—

S. "That sow beside all waters."

T. That is, everywhere, in all places, at all times. But do you remember something else which is compared to sowing in 1 Cor. xv. ?

S. The resurrection of the body.

T. Now read verses 36—38, and then 42—44.

S. "That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed His own body." "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

T. We all know, when we sow a seed in the ground, how utterly unlike the beautiful young plant, which springs up and grows, is to the small dry seed which we planted; yet, at the same time, we know and feel sure that it is that very seed, and nothing else, which has thus sprung up. St. Paul says it is not quickened, except it die first; and so it is with the resurrection of the dead, "sown in weakness," "raised in glory."

Perhaps, however, the most solemn comparison of all is that in which our Lord says, "the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels;" what parable is that in?

S. The wheat and the tares.

T. What is meant by the harvest-field?

S. The world.

T. Who sowed the tares in that field?

S. The devil.

T. What are all living people in that field?

S. Good seed or bad, wheat or tares.

T. You remember the servants of the Lord would have gathered out the tares at once, why were they not to do so?

S. He said, "Let both grow together until the harvest, and I will say to my reapers, Gather ye the tares into bundles to burn them."

T. You see *they* were not to separate between the good and the bad—they were not the reapers; the Lord said, "I will say to my reapers," and who are those reapers?

S. The angels.

T. And what was to be done with the wheat?

S. It was to be gathered into the garner.

T. You know what that garner means?

S. Heaven; His kingdom.

T. Let us remember that our own hearts are like a little portion of the harvest-field which the Lord of the harvest has given to us to keep and cultivate for His service, and in which the enemy is continually endeavouring to sow tares. And what are the tares he would sow in our hearts?

S. Evil thoughts—anything wicked.

T. Oh, let us strive, through the grace of God, to have our hearts so filled with the things which are pure, lovely, and of good report, that there shall be no room for the evil weeds of sin to take root and grow therein. So shall we be like trees of righteousness planted by the Lord, bringing forth their fruit in due season. So may we look forward with joy to the great harvest-day, when our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ shall come again, and send forth His angel-reapers to reap the harvest of the earth. Then shall those who, by grace, have lived the life of faith, and brought forth the fruits of righteousness on earth, through His mercy and love, be gathered safely into His heavenly kingdom, where His word says, we shall have right to the tree of life, and where the pure river of the water of life flows through that glorious "city which has no need of the sun or moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

October, 1863. J. M.

AN ADDRESS TO A GIRLS' SCHOOL

ON A FEATHER.

More than a year back I picked up this feather on my lawn. At first I thought it perfectly black and dull; but when I held it up to the light, there was a very pretty tinge of colour to be seen—a dark but very glossy green; so pretty that I would not throw the feather away, but brought it indoors, and put it inside our Sunday School Register, where it has been ever since. One of your teachers saw it there, and asked me why I kept it; I said that I thought I should find something to say about it to you, girls, some day; and now the day is come. For the feather brought two things into my mind, that I should like you to think about; the first is FLYING, the second is SHELTER. To-day I am going to talk about SHELTER OR SAFETY.

It is a rook's feather; perhaps you could tell that, if you looked at it. I am sure your brothers could. And I often think it a pity that girls should know so little as they do about God's works. It is quite true that their chief duties are indoors, but that is no reason that they should not use their eyes, and also take an interest in Natural history.

Your brothers would also tell you that what you generally call crows are rooks. The crow is a sulky, solitary bird, like a girl that makes no friends. The rook is sociable and friendly, and likes to live with numbers of cousins and friends; and he is constantly talking, like another sort of girls.

Suppose we imagine the feather to talk now, as if the rook himself, who lost it out of his wing, were speaking to you—not Caw, Caw, but good sober English. "Look at me, little folks, with your fair rosy cheeks, and brown hair. Don't think me dull and dirty. My colour is more glossy than those very smart feathers that some of you stick into your hats, as if you were young Flamingoes with their scarlet plumes. That bright red of yours is the dyer's work; and though he is so clever, his colours won't last like mine. Perhaps you think me dowdy. That is only because you don't look close. If you do, you will see that as long as I stick on the rook's back, I never grow dull or dirty. Your feathers do, for if a little rain falls, see what a fuss you are in to get under cover, or an umbrella, lest your fine feathers be spoilt!

"But now think where I have been! You walk and run. You have power to move about, as God gives you health and strength. But you can never do as I do. Sometimes one or two men come up into the air in a huge machine that frightens all the birds, but we see they soon have enough of it, and go back. Nor can they move where they like, as rooks do; but are carried about as the wind chooses to blow.

"See, too, how useful I am in another way! Instead of growing sopped and draggly, in the rain, like your feathers, I have a little store of oil all over me, so the rain runs off me on to you; and we go on flap, flap, as if nothing was the matter.

"But if you want to see me doing my best, peep into the rook's nest some May morning! Don't let your cruel brothers bring it down, but as you can't climb, imagine what there is to be seen: five or six little rooks nestled together, as if to keep each other company, and help to prevent themselves tumbling

out when the wind blows, and the cradle will rock. They are queer little creatures, their wings without a feather, so that they cannot fly. Their beaks are wide open every minute as father rook brings them their food.

"But what do I do for them? I SHELTER them. Little naked shivering squalling birdies, what would they do if it were not that their mother rook broods over them with her wings outstretched to cover each tiny head and body. And there they live safe. The high winds blow, and the trees wave backwards and forwards; the rain falls, sometimes lightly, but often in heavy driving showers; but nothing hurts these little creatures. The Great God who made you, He made them also; and He cares for them. Has He not told you so?"

Yes, dear girls, that feather says true; and every feather helps to show that the fowls of the air, as well as all other animals, are God's making and God's care. Not even can one of them die, unseen or unnoticed by Him! If you remembered this, you would never take away the life even of a bird unless it was doing mischief, or unless it was needed for food, which God has told us we may take.

Now, if God cares for birds, will He not care for you? Are you not much better? I said just now, that girls are sometimes apt to dress up too much, and trust to their clothes to set themselves off. Now I do like neatness and *good* taste, and I think that every one should dress according to their station; rich people wearing dresses suitable to their means, and other people wearing dress suitable to their's. I should not like to see the Queen dressed in calico or cotton; nor a servant dressed in satin and velvet. Each to their station. But far more pleasant than a gay dress is the bright, cheerful, kind face. Don't you think as I do, that a plain hat with a smiling face under it, is much better than feathers and frowns? Well, this brings us to the reason why God cares so much more for you than He does for the birds, whether small or great, dull or gay, tuneful or dumb. Those little animals live awhile, and then perish for ever! They are happy in their way, as you can tell by their songs, or their twittering; but it is a short life and an endless death; nor can they give a heart's praise and love to Him who made them, for their tiny hearts have got no wonderful, wonderful, soul living there, to think, to learn, to remember, to fear, to love, to long. YOU HAVE! And, therefore, God who cares for them, cares much more for you.

And He himself has compared His care for you to that of a bird for her little nestlings. When you have half an hour to spare, look through your Bibles for all the texts that speak of this, for I can only find time for two or three now. One is in the 91st Psalm, "He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust." Another is in the 17th; David beseeches God to take care of him thus, "Keep me as the apple (or pupil) of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings." So you see man's prayer is answered by God's promise. And like this, is one part of our Evening Hymn:

"Keep me, oh keep me, King of kings,
Beneath thine own Almighty wings.

How safe are the little birds! How much more safe are the children of God! The mother rook may die herself; God never, never can be taken away. No, nor can He ever forget, nor will He ever slumber or sleep. Night and day, in sickness or in health, in poverty or in riches, alone or with many friends, it does not matter how, God's children are in His keeping.

Then how SAFE they are! Jesus says "they shall never perish." We look at the graves where dear children lie, that God took to Himself in their early life, and we thank God that they are safe. Ah, but, my dear girls, if once your

hearts are given to God, and your names are in His Book of Life, you too are just as safe. The little bird is safe, not because it chooses to be sheltered, but because the mother chooses and rejoices to shelter it. And you are safe, not because you choose, but because God chooses. Will you not all then come to Him with David's prayer, "Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings"? You may feel (indeed I hope you *do* feel) that you do not deserve such tender care, and that you often run yourself into danger, just as if the little unfledged bird forsook the nest to take care of itself; poor silly little thing, it must fall from the giddy height and be killed. Oh, never, never wander away from your heavenly Father! I think you know what I mean by that. Don't wish, or try to live without Him, or forgetting Him, but keep close to Him. Watch against any sin that leads you away, whether it be the love of dress, or vanity, or foolish talking, or any other of the numberless ways in which Satan tries to lead you far from God. Once, as you will remember, even the Lord Jesus Himself said that He would have gathered the children of Jerusalem together, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and they "*would not*."

And remember one thing more. As the little birds thus are sheltered, they grow, until they can fly by themselves. So God's children, kept and sheltered by Him, grow in grace, and get stronger and stronger, until, as Isaiah says, "they mount up with wings," yes, even into the very home of their Father and their Saviour.

God keeps His children until they come there, not one of them being lost. With such a home before you, do not be afraid of sorrows and troubles. Some must come, to do you good, and to teach you the very lesson that you have yet to find a better home, where no storms will blow. Have faith then in God, and even death itself will not terrify you, for He is ever with you.

Listen, last of all, to some words that I am very fond of, and which are set to beautiful music:—

"Rock'd in the cradle of the deep,
I lay me down in peace to sleep.
Secure I rest upon the wave,
For Thou, O Lord, hast power to save.
I know Thou wilt not slight my call,
For Thou dost mark the sparrow's fall;
And so, securely shall I sleep,
Rocked in the cradle of the deep.

"And such the trust that still were mine,
Though stormy winds swept o'er the brine,
And though the tempest's fiery breath
Roused me from slumber to wreck and death.
In Ocean's cave safe shall I lie,
A gem of immortality,
And there securely shall I sleep,
Rocked in the cradle of the deep."

E. E. J.

NOTES OF LESSONS ON THE LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.

(Designed as Occasional Supplementary Lessons for Bible Classes).

The companions chosen by our Lord during His ministry on earth have a special interest to all His followers, for they have recorded for our learning and consolation the words and deeds of Him "who spake as never man spake," and who did "all things well." It was by their long personal intercourse with the Saviour, and by the inspiration of His Spirit, that they were qualified to become the first teachers of the Gospel. Yet, while thus specially commissioned for a high and holy work, they may still be regarded in their character as simple believers, like ourselves, with like passions, feelings, trials, and temptations; and thus, in their individual experiences may teach lessons of practical and personal application to each one of us.

1.—St. Matthew.

This Apostle is called in the Gospel of St. Mark (ii. 14), a son of Alphæus, and (unless there were two of the same name) was thus related to the mother of our Lord, whose sister was the wife of Cleophas, or Alphæus (John xix. 25, Luke xxiv. 10). His other name, Levi, also shows him to be of Hebrew extraction.

He was a publican, or toll collector (Matt. x. 3) who resided at Capernaum, and was employed in receiving the customs on all goods coming by the sea of Galilee, and the tribute from the passengers on the road thence to Damascus. His office, though one of repute among the Romans, and one implying trust and confidence in his integrity, was held in great abhorrence by the Jews, for it was a perpetual reminder of their captivity and subjection to a heathen ruler, and those Jews who held it were suspected of conspiring with the enemies of their country, were looked upon as unclean (by being brought into such frequent contact with the Gentiles) and were accused of being both covetous and unjust. It does not follow, however, that such was their true condition in *every* case, and we have no reason to suppose it was so in that of Matthew.

Our Lord had delivered His Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v.—vii.), and had returned to His own city (Capernaum) where He cured a man sick of the palsy, when He afterwards walked by the side of the lake, and saw Matthew sitting at the place where custom was received, and called him to follow Him. How strong was his faith, how instant his obedience, how self-denying his submission, we know from what St. Luke tells us: "he left all, rose up, and followed Him," (Luke v. 28).

That all his companions and friends might know he had taken this step, and also to make a public profession of his faith in Jesus as the Messiah, he invited them to a feast at which his new Master was present. Many publicans were there, and some Scribes and Pharisees, who were provoked to ask him, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" to which our Lord gave the answer of mercy, which they could so little appreciate (see Luke v. 30—32.)

Matthew is not again mentioned in the Gospels, and only in the Acts (i. 13) to show that he was present with the rest of the apostles on the day of our Lord's resurrection.

Beyond the records of Scripture, we have no certain account of the labours of the Apostles, but from the traditions of the early Church we are able to gather many interesting particulars of

their subsequent career, which—though not authoritative, or to be received with that implicit faith which we ought to give to Scripture alone,—may yet be accepted as historically worthy of our notice.

From these early records we gather that, after our Lord's ascension, St. Matthew remained nearly fifteen years in Jerusalem, preaching the Gospel to his own nation, in accordance with the order of his Divine Master, "*beginning* at Jerusalem"' (Luke xxiv. 47). Subsequently he travelled into other countries, and laboured chiefly in Ethiopia, in one of the cities of which, according to one account, he was put to death; but by another early writer he is stated to have been one of the apostles who did not suffer martyrdom.

The Gospel which bears his name is regarded as the first of the four histories of our Lord, having been written not many years after our Lord's ascension, for the use of the Hebrew Christians in Palestine. It specially avoided offending the prejudices of the Jews, answered the objections which their rulers brought against our Lord, and proved that the Messiah so long promised had come, and that His kingdom while including first the Jews, was to embrace the Gentiles also. For the use of the latter this Gospel was subsequently translated into Greek.

The character of St. Matthew, as far as the brief glimpse we obtain of it enables us to judge, shows how men can and should resign temporal gains and earthly position, at the call of Christ, for the prospect of eternal reward; and how the Spirit of God changes the tempers and tastes of men. For Matthew, the maker of gain at the receipt of custom, and who honoured his Master, on His call, by a great feast, became a man of great abstinence, even abstaining, it is said by some, from animal food, and endured hardness and poverty for Christ's sake.

II.—St. Bartholomew.

Nathanael was the real name of this Apostle, and that of Bartholomew his family name—signifying the son of Talmai, a name common among the Jews (see Josh xv. 14; 2 Sam. xiii. 37). In all the accounts of the Apostles given by the three first Evangelists he is mentioned in connexion with Philip, and in the same association he is spoken of by St. John, who, however, calls him Nathanael.

We learn from the beloved disciple's most interesting account of this Apostle that he was a native of Cana of Galilee, (John xxi. 2), and that he was introduced to our Lord by Philip, who going to Nathanael, told him that he had found in Jesus of Nazareth the true Messiah. The circumstance leads us to conclude that Nathanael was known to be one of those devout men who were hoping for the consolation of Israel, and trusting in the fulfilment of the Divinely-promised advent of the Messiah. The ordinary popular prejudice of the Jews had its influence upon his mind, however, as we learn from his enquiry when he heard whence Jesus came, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Nevertheless, as there was no evil in his heart keeping him back from the light, he was ready to follow the suggestion of his informant, "Come and see." It was then, as he drew near, that our blessed Lord uttered those words of approbation of his character which have ever since made his name synonymous with purity and simplicity,—"Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." Our Lord knew his feelings, although they had not been spoken in His presence, and therefore condescended to give him a simple and touching proof of His omniscience and omnipresence which to one of Nathanael's spirit, was sufficient to remove all his previous hesitation, and to prompt him to exclaim, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israe

(John i. 45—51). This confession was followed by a promise from our Lord that he should receive stronger proofs in the future, even as He has said to all,—"He that hath, to him shall be given."

He was from thenceforward a follower of Jesus, and afterwards chosen to the Apostleship. Accompanying his Divine Master first to the marriage feast in his native place, Cana (John ii. 1. 2), he continued with Him throughout His ministry, and after His resurrection was one of those to whom the Lord appeared at the sea of Galilee (John xxi.), from whence it has been inferred that he, in common with several of the Apostles, was a fisherman.

All that we know from Scripture of his subsequent history is that he returned with the rest of the brethren to Jerusalem, and was present at the solemn election of Matthias (Acts i. 13): but early historians speak of his subsequent labours for several years in Judæa, and of his afterwards proceeding to preach to the Indians—a description too vague when used by early writers, to fix with any certainty the sphere of his labours, which are, however, supposed to have been devoted to the country bordering on Ethiopia, then chiefly inhabited by Jews. In the second century, Pantænus states that when he went on a mission to the Indians he found a Hebrew copy of St. Matthew's Gospel, which had been left among them by St. Bartholomew, and that he brought it with him to Alexandria.

This Apostle's labours are reported to have been closed in the western part of Asia, where, as some say in Armenia, and others in Cilicia, he was put to death by order of the rulers, for endeavouring to reclaim the people from idolatry. His end was attended with circumstances of great cruelty—being first flayed, and afterwards crucified; but he is said to have died cheerfully, trusting with unswerving faith in that Divine Master who bore so decided a testimony to his simplicity and sincerity of heart, when He first called him to His service.

III.—St. Thomas.

This Apostle is also called Didymus, a Syriac name signifying the same as the Hebrew word Thomas, *i.e.*—*a twin*. Neither his family nor his occupation are certainly known, but he is supposed to have been a native of Galilee, and probably employed as a fisherman, from the circumstance of his joining the Apostles at the lake, when they had determined "to go a fishing" after the resurrection of the Lord (John xxi. 2, 3).

The only incidents personally relating to Thomas are recorded by St. John. The first is on the occasion of the raising of Lazarus. Jesus had signified his intention of going back again into Judæa when He knew that he whom He loved was dead, and Thomas then said, "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (John xi. 16); an expression, which if it referred to Lazarus, indicated an impulsive outburst of natural affection,—that he did not care greatly to live since he was gone; but which, it is most probable, was spoken in respect of our Lord, whom the Jews had threatened to stone (John xi. 8), and whose life was therefore in jeopardy, if He went back among them. His words expressed a wish to share His dangers, but no confidence that He could work a miracle, or protect Himself or His followers from popular violence.

We thus gather some idea of the character of Thomas—one full of ardour and affection—an excitable temperament, acted upon by the impulse of strong passions rather than by the understanding, or the convictions of sound judgment. It is interesting to notice the contrasts of disposition exist-

ing among the chosen twelve, for it helps us to see how the Gospel works upon all varieties of men, not by transforming all into the same mould, but by retaining and sanctifying the special characteristics of each.

The question Thomas asked of our Lord, during His last discourse with the disciples before He suffered (John xiv. 5), confirms this view of his character. His faith was weak, needing confirmation and proof, almost to demonstration, and we see in this doubtfulness and unwillingness to trust to hearsay evidence, the prelude for that more decided exhibition of it, which is given after our Lord's resurrection (John xx. 19—25). He was not present when our Saviour appeared to His Apostles. He did not doubt the truth of their statement, but in common with them and with the Jewish people, he believed in apparitions from the spiritual world (instance when Christ walked on the sea, Matt. xiv. 26), and supposed either that they had been deceived, or that a spirit only had appeared to them. The crucifixion had shaken his faith, as it had theirs (Luke xxiv. 21), for as yet they knew not that He must rise again. With the characteristic desire for proof he always exhibited, he therefore waited until he had the test of *touch*, before he would believe that the Lord had risen indeed. Very tenderly and graciously the Saviour fulfilled His doubting Apostle's wish (St. John xx. 26—29), and confirmed and increased his faith, leading him, by the hearing of His voice, and by inviting him to touch His risen body, not only to cease to doubt, but to attain a higher belief in Him as his "Lord and his God." There was sufficient proof of the fact of the resurrection without this—but with it the greatest sceptic is now left without excuse. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." As in the olden times by prophecy, so now by the records of those who testified of what they saw, we are enabled to believe. If those who lived in the time of our Lord had the advantage of seeing His works and listening to His words, they saw also the enmity and prejudice against Him, they shared the general ignorance of His intentions, and the risk of ridicule and danger if they believed in Him. *We* have additional light shed upon all that Christ did—we know the full purpose of all He suffered—the Holy Spirit has cleared away the mystery which obscured some of His words—and the preaching of the Apostles and the success of the Gospel throughout the world are added evidences of its truth. Faith rests upon internal, not upon external proofs—but the latter are abundant if needed.

To notice briefly the subsequent labours of St. Thomas:—we find him described as preaching in Parthia Persia, Chaldea and Ethiopia, and according to another account becoming also the first missionary in India. The sphere of his labour is stated to have been at Malipur, in the kingdom of Coromandel, in the Bay of Bengal. There his gentleness and earnestness plainly proved to the Brahmins that the religion of the country would be overthrown if his preaching did not cease; and it is recorded that on one occasion when he was engaged in private prayer, he was attacked by men who heaped stones upon him, and wounded him with lances and arrows, till he died. His body was buried in the church at Malipur, which he had caused to be built, and when the Portuguese settled in India some four hundred years ago they found a large number of Christians still existing, and the tradition of St. Thomas having planted the church there, prevailing among them.

If *we* have doubted, and have been afterwards convinced of the truth, let us cultivate a like spirit of earnest zeal in spreading it in the dark places of the earth. Ed. S.

NOTES ON

THE SERIES OF FIFTY-TWO LESSONS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, EMBRACING THE CHIEF TOPICS OF THE BIBLE.

At the request of many Sunday school teachers who have long used this Series of Lessons,—outlines of which were published many years since by the Institute,—the Committee have selected them as the subjects for the Notes on Lessons for Bible Classes for the present year. These Notes originally appeared in the first Series of the Teachers' Monthly Magazine, published by the Institute in 1851, and have long since been out of print. They were then intended for the Testament or middle classes of the Sunday school; they have now been revised and altered, with a view to the subjects of which they treat being rendered more suitable for the elder scholars.

Although the passages of Scripture, of which these Lessons consist, may appear, at first sight, to be selected unconnectedly from various parts of the Bible, it will be found, on examination, that they are chosen on the plan of presenting *in order* the chief topics contained in the revealed Word of God.

Thus we are led to consider—first, the attributes of God; then his Revelation to man; the original state, fall, and corruption of the whole human race, and the punishment of sin; then follow the promise of a Saviour, His birth, character, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension; then lessons on our union with, and faith in, Christ; next, on the Holy Spirit and the effects of His presence in the soul, contrasted with the fruits of the flesh; and, lastly, lessons on the future judgment and its issues.

The order of these lessons is exactly the same as that followed in the Second Series of the Elementary Class Book, so that where that book is also used, the whole school can be examined on the same subject.

Notes for the use of Teachers using the Elementary Series of these lessons have appeared in the volume of the Teacher's Monthly Magazine for 1861, and also in the "Teacher's Key to the Elementary Class Book," published by the Institute.

LESSON I.—God the Creator, Genesis I. 1—25.

We look upon the world and all that it contains, and our reason tells us that some one must have created what we behold; but the wisdom of this world would not without Revelation lead us to God (1 Cor. i. 21), as the history of Pagan nations clearly proves. The Bible declares that God was the Creator of all things visible and invisible. Man cannot *make* anything in the sense of *creating* it; he only avails himself of the materials with which God has furnished him, and *adapts* them to his purpose.

The works of man take time, and require proper implements. God created all things instantly, alone, and by a word, Ps. xxxiii. 6—9, cii. 25; Heb. xi. 3. Hence we learn His greatness and power. When the earth and all things in it were created, God pronounced them all to be "very good;" everything was prepared for the comfort and happiness of man, the noblest of God's creatures; and we know in part ourselves how exactly everything is fitted for its appointed end —how beautifully all the works of creation harmonize with one another. We notice the order in which things were made: first, the light, without which life, whether animal or vegetable, cannot exist; then the earth was prepared to bring forth, and the waters gathered to fertilize it; next, vegetable life was produced in all its countless variety and rich luxuriance; the heavenly bodies formed the subject of creation on the fourth day; and then succeeded animal life, the fishes, the birds, the beasts. And all this was preparing the earth for the habitation of man, whose creation followed, and will form the subject of another lesson.

A knowledge of the works of God in creation, and even a slight insight into their endless variety, abundance, and adaptability to their several purposes, must impress us with a sense of the wisdom and goodness of God. In the original, the word "God" (verse 1) is plural, whilst the verb "created" is singular, and the sentence literally translated reads thus, "Gods he created," from which we learn the plurality of persons in the unity of the Godhead. In verse 2, the agency of the Holy Spirit is distinctly set forth, and we know from other passages that the second person in the blessed Trinity was likewise an active agent in this great work, John i. 3; Col. i. 16; if we compare Job xxxiii. 4; Is. xl. 22—31; Acts xvii. 24-26; Eph. iii. 9, with Deut. vi. 4, the doctrine of the Trinity in unity is clearly revealed.

Explanatory Notes.—Verse 1.—*The heaven*; the boundless expanse around and above us, in which the sun, moon, and stars are placed.

Verse 2.—*Without form*; a confused, indigested heap, without shape or order *Void*; empty, destitute of vegetable or animal life.

Verse 3.—*God said*; that is, God willed. Before the creation of the sun, light existed in some way which we cannot understand, and it measured out the day and night.

Verse 6.—*Firmament*; Hebrew, "expansion," the atmosphere surrounding the earth.

Verse 7.—The clouds filled with water (Ps. civ. 3; Jer. x. 13) were separated from the seas and rivers by the atmosphere.

Verse 8.—*Heaven*; Heb., heavens, (Ps. xix. 1); used in the same sense as in verse 1.

Verse 9.—The seas and the earth being separated, the dry land appeared. What a beautiful instance of God's wisdom and goodness do we here observe! By the seas, which at first sight appear to set up a barrier between nation and nation, commerce and intercourse are immensely facilitated, and by them the whole earth is watered and made fertile.

Verse 11.—Think of the wonderful variety of plants, each bearing its own seed, and reproduced each after its own kind, although the distinction between the seeds is to the human eye scarcely discernible; and remark the marvellous manner in which some of them, as the thistle, are spread abroad, and all are enabled to multiply without the aid of man. (Ps. civ. 24.)

Verse 16.—The light which before existed was concentrated in the sun. The moon is an opaque body, reflecting the sun's rays. She is called here one of the greater lights, as compared with the stars, not that she is really larger than, or anything approaching to, the size of the fixed stars, but that relatively to our earth she appears larger.

Verse 21.—*Whales* may include all the large inhabitants of seas and rivers.

APPLICATION.—God's greatness and power should lead us to fear to offend him. His goodness and mercy should teach us to love Him. (Rev. iv. 11).

LESSON II.—GOD A SPIRIT, JOHN IV. 1—30.

OPPOSED by the Pharisees,—who were angry at the success of John the Baptist and of Jesus in baptising disciples,—we find that our Lord determined to leave Judæa and to retire to Galilee. Partaking of all the sinless infirmities of our human nature which He had taken upon Himself, Christ was "wearied with his journey" through Samaria, and sat down to rest upon the well of Sychar. He "*must needs* go through Samaria," not only because it was the direct and usual way to Galilee, but also because there was work for him to do there: sinners to be preached to, souls to be saved.

The conversation which ensued between Jesus and the woman shows the prejudices and animosities which existed between the Jews and the Samaritans, (the origin of which may be gathered from 2 Kings xvii. 24—28.; Ezra iv. 2—11; Neh., vi. 1—14, and in their setting up a temple for worship on Mount Gerizim), and gave occasion for our Saviour to point out the true service which God requires. God is a Spirit, and therefore requires a spiritual worship, Rom. viii 8. External forms are nothing in His sight, without the worship and devotion of the heart; nay, they are hypocrisy, Matt. xxiii. 25—28. To draw near to God with our lips, whilst our heart is far from Him (Is. xxix. 13), is to mock Him who is the heart-searching God (1 Sam. xvi. 7; 1 Chron. xxviii. 9), and knows the very thoughts and intents of our heart, Acts i. 24; Heb. iv. 12.

But the natural man understands not this spiritual worship (1 Cor. ii. 14), as we may see from the various forms of idolatry which have prevailed throughout all ages, Job. xxxi. 26—28; Acts vii. 42; the objects of worship being different, but all *material*. Refer to Ex. xx. 4; Deut. iv. 15—19. Many are the instances of God's punishment of idolaters—Solomon, 1 Kings xi. 5, 9, 31; Jeroboam, 1 Kings xii. 28, 31; xiv. 14—16; Baasha, 1 Kings xvi. 1—4, 12; Ahab and Jezebel, 1 Kings xvi. 30—33; xxii. 37, 38; 2 Kings ix. 36, 37; God everywhere condemns it, Ex. xxxii. 4; Isa. xliv. 9—19; Ps. cxv. 4—8; Dan. iii. 1—5.

God only by his Holy Spirit can incline the heart to serve Him spiritually, John iii. 5—8. The man created anew in Christ Jesus possesses new capacities, affections, and dispositions, and is prepared to make a new and spiritual use of all his senses and faculties, 2 Cor. v. 17. God has promised his Holy Spirit to them who ask Him, Luke xi. 13; John xiv. 16—18.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 1.—*Pharisees*, a powerful sect of the Jews, proud of their outward observance of the ceremonial law, Luke xi. 42—44; xviii. 11, 12.

Verse 5.—*Sychar* is supposed to have been the same as Sichem or Shechem, Gen. xxxiii. 18, 19.

Verse 6.—*Sixth hour*, about noon, the ordinary time of the Jewish meal, see v. 8.

Verse 9.—For the reason of this see the passages before referred to, and Acts x. 28. Samaritan was a term of reproach among the Jews, John viii. 48.

Verse 10.—*The gift of God*, the favour of God in giving her that opportunity of conversing with the Son whom He hath given to be the Saviour of the world (John iii. 16). *Living water* was a fit emblem of the Holy Spirit. By this term, however, the woman understood a spring or fountain of running water.

Verse 14.—*The water that I shall give him*, a striking emblem of the blessing of the teaching, grace, and spirit of Christ, for water in eastern countries is greatly needed, and most precious to all; so is the Saviour to souls "athirst for the living God."

Verse 19.—*I perceive*, slowly indeed did she come to apprehend our Lord's meaning, and not till He proved that He knew her life, did she see the force of His previous teaching.

Verse 20.—*This mountain*, Gerizim, near to which Abraham and Jacob erected altars, Gen. xii. 6—8; xxxiii 20; and where Sanballat, after the time of Nehemiah, built a temple, which was destroyed one hundred and thirty-one years before Christ.

Verse 21.—*Neither*, not at Jerusalem or Gerizim *only*, for the Gospel was about to be proclaimed to all the world, and all men every where, whether Jew or Gentile, would be called upon to serve God.

Verse 22.—*Salvation is of the Jews*, their temple and their worship was the true one, as opposed to the ignorant and corrupt Samaritan worship.

Verse 23.—*In spirit*, with the mind, heart, and soul more than with outward demonstration. *In truth*, in sincerity, really, heartily.

Verse 24.—God is a spirit, not a material being, that is, does not possess a body which can be the subject of our senses, and can neither be touched nor seen. John i. 18; v. 37; 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. We do not doubt that there is such a thing as the wind because we cannot see it: we breathe the air, but we cannot see it. So we can see what God does, but we cannot see Him, for He is eternal, invisible, dwelling in a light and glory which none can approach unto.

APPLICATION.—God by His own nature and by His express desire demands this spiritual worship. Let us pray for the Holy Spirit to enable us so to serve Him.

LESSON III.—GOD EVERYWHERE AND ALL-SEEING, PSALM CXXXIX.

THIS Psalm contains David's experience of, and testimony to, the Omniscience and Omnipresence of GOD. The heights of heaven, the depths of hell, the uttermost parts of the earth, are all described as within His reach, and in His presence. There is no distance and no darkness with God, so that all is present and clear to Him. The mystery of the human form, the curious texture of nerves, veins, arteries, bones, muscles, flesh and skin interwoven together, is a testimony to His wondrous power, while His knowledge of every trace and turning of each human

heart, (Rev. ii. 23) every wish and motive, shows how near God is to every one of us, (Prov. v. 21; Jer. xvii. 10; 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; Heb. iv. 13.) While He accepts the heart-worship of His faithful people (Gen. xviii. 9), He rejects the lip-service of the apostate (Ezek. xxxiii. 31). So our Lord "knew what was in man," (Matt. ix. 4; Mark ii. 8; John ii. 24, 25). The past, the present, and the future are alike clear to the God with whom we have to do (Gen. xvi. 13). Such thoughts of God should fill us with a holy fear, and make us humble and contrite, although at the same time thankful, if we are sincere, that He knows *all*, and will fulfil *all* our need.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 1.—*Searched, and known me.* The heart is deceitful above all things, who can know it? Man cannot, but God can and does. Men look on the outward actions and judge accordingly, but "the Lord looketh on the heart," 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

Verse 3.—*Compassest*, in the margin, "winnowest;" as wheat, after being threshed, is winnowed, in order to separate the grain from the chaff, so the omniscient and omnipresent God distinguishes accurately between the good and the evil in our conduct, thoughts, and motives.

Verse 4.—If we are tempted by sudden provocation to utter an angry or blasphemous word, the Almighty knows and marks it, even if not uttered.

Verses 5, 6.—*Laid thine hand upon me.* God follows us as closely as a most familiar friend, and that at all times; do we strive to walk as near to God, or would we rather that He were farther off?

Verse 8.—*Hell*; not simply the grave, but the state in which the soul exists after separation from the body, and before the resurrection; as our Saviour "descended into hell."

Verse 9.—*Wings of the morning*; that is, if I could fly as fast and as far as the light travels.

Verse 13.—*My reins*, the inward thoughts and affections, the will by which our actions are directed.

Verse. 16.—*All my members*; refer to Matt. x. 30: "the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

Verse 18.—*Still with thee*; that is, his thoughts and affections returned to heavenly things as their greatest treasure, on his very earliest waking, Luke xii. 34.

Verse 19.—*Depart from me therefore*; an expression of David's hatred of the sinfulness of those with whom his duty perhaps compelled him to associate in some degree. We must be *in* the world, but not *of* the world, John xvii. 15, 16.

Verses 21, 22.—*I count them mine enemies*; so long as they continue in wilful and open disobedience towards God, for the "friend of the world is the enemy of God," James iv. 4.

Verses 23, 24.—*See if there be any wicked way in me.* David was not conscious of any allowed sin, but he knew the deceitfulness of the heart, and prayed to be cleansed from secret faults, which are all known to Him whose "eyes are in every place," Prov. xv. 3.

APPLICATION.—Is the presence of God irksome to us, and does it lay constraint on us? or is it a matter of rejoicing that He knows our thoughts, and is always present with us?

LESSON IV.—God Ruling over all.—Daniel IV.

We have already noticed the power of God in creation—that authoritative Word by which matter was called into being, and so fashioned as instantaneously to produce order and beauty where all was formless chaos before. The laws of Nature, as we call them, are the constant exhibition of God ruling over all His works, by which all are sustained and preserved, directed and controlled. The unerring motion of the heavenly bodies, the laws of gravitation, &c., are God's rules for His creation; and all that the microscope, the telescope, and all other appliances and results of modern science reveal, only afford fresh illustration of this truth.

But in God's government of the world we have further proof of it. We see it in His providential dealings with His people, and in His resistance to the proud defiance of their enemies—as in the case of Pharaoh, and in that of Nebuchadnezzar, the subject of this Lesson. The mode of God's interposition may now be changed,—it may no longer be evident to all, as in His dealings in behalf of the Jews—but, working through human agencies, He not less truly rules over all, raises or casts down kings, empires, or individuals.

Nebuchadnezzar was king of "mighty" Babylon; the capital was so beautiful and so splendid that he felt very proud of his part in increasing its grandeur, and rejoiced in his long series of brilliant successes. He forgot he was but an instrument in God's hand (1 Cor. iv. 7), and feeling proud and rebellious in his heart, as Pharaoh did (Exod. v. 2; xiv. 22—26), was suddenly cast down by an Invisible hand, and by the same power afterwards restored, without any natural cause or means being employed. This chapter is Nebuchadnezzar's own proclamation of God's dealings with him, and was one of the public records of the Babylonian empire,—furnishing a striking instance of God's over-ruling power.

Explanatory Notes.—Verses 4, 5.—See the littleness of man—a mighty king terrified by a dream. God can make things "that are not" confound the mighty.

Verse 7. — *Astrologers*; that is, star-readers. The Chaldeans were well acquainted with the movements of the planets and stars, and pretended to foretell the future from the aspect of the heavens.

Verse 16.—A change of object here takes place from a tree to a man, as in the fantastic transitions of a dream. *Times*, or years.

Verse 17 —Some think that the triune Jehovah is meant by the *watchers and the holy ones*; others, the angels, God's holy messengers (Heb. i. 14). *The basest of men.* When bad men are set up to bear rule, it is by permission of the Almighty King of kings.

Verse 18.—*The holy Gods*, or the Lord God of Israel.

Verse 19.—*Astonied*; amazed at the strange judgment about to fall on his master.

Verses 27—30.—See the warning unheeded, and pride indulged.

Verse 31.—*While the Word.*—As soon as he spoke God's sentence came; so with Herod, Acts xii. 23. None can resist Him, Gen. xi. 1—9; Deut. xxxii. 39.

Verse 32.—*Seven times*—periods of time; *i.e.*, seven *years*.

Verses 33, 34.—*The same hour*;—at once was the judgment sent, and as exactly "at the end of the days" predicted, was the affliction removed, and the king's reason restored.

Verses 35—37.—God doth not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men; when His chastening produces the intended effect it is removed. The king was

humbled—he recognised God's sovereign power and his own nothingness in His sight, and was glad to obey Him. So a blessing follows from sanctified affliction, Deut. xxviii. 2; Luke xi. 28; Rom. vi. 22, 23.

APPLICATION.—Men readily admit that God ruleth over all, so long as their self-will is not interfered with. Is it so with us? or do we really seek to be ruled in our daily conduct by His sovereign will? How safe are those whom *He* keeps!

LESSON V.—GOD'S HOLINESS AND JUSTICE.—EZEKIEL XXXIII. 1—20.

THE prophecy of this Chapter begins by describing the duty of a watchman, who was set in time of war to give notice by blowing his trumpet (or as it would be done in modern times, by firing his gun) whenever he saw the enemy coming: if he neglected his duty, he would be answerable for all who might be taken by surprise; while if he gave the warning but they took no notice of it, the fault would rest with them, and he would be clear, verses 1—6. In verses 7—9, God compares the prophet Ezekiel to this watchman, as appointed to warn the people of the danger to which their souls were exposed; and in the remaining verses he is told what answer he should make to them when they complained that God dealt with them harshly, punishing them for sins which they could not help, and giving them no opportunity to escape. He was to assure them that God wished them to return to Him and receive pardon, and to show them that there was the strictest justice in all God's dealings with them; that while any good man, if he forsook the paths of righteousness and lived in sin, would surely be punished; so any wicked man, if he turned from iniquity and gave up his heart to God, would certainly be saved.

One chief lesson derived from this portion of Scripture, is the holiness of God and our obligation to be like Him: see Lev. xi. 44; 2 Tim. ii. 19; Heb, xii. 14; 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. Sin is always hateful to Him, but especially in His people, Amos iii. 1—2, for He gave His Son to free them from it, Rom. iii. 25, 26.

The next great lesson we learn is the impartial and even-handed justice with which God deals with mankind. This is set before us in his treatment—1. Of the *faithful watchman*; who would be regarded with equal favour, whether the people took his warning or not. 2. Of the *unfaithful watchman*; whose office would not save him from deserved punishment. 3. Of the *people*, over whom the watchman was appointed; who, if warned, would be guilty, but if not warned, would not be held responsible. 4. Of the *good man*; who becomes wicked and dies in his sins. 5. Of the *wicked man*; who repents and is saved.

While these are the main lessons to be kept in view, several other subordinate ones may be drawn, in passing, from the different verses. As for example we learn from verse 2 that it is God who brings judgments on a land, Ezek. xiv. 21:—from verses 7, 8, that the teacher is set as a watchman over his children; and that God will hold him responsible, if he does not give them faithful warning:—from verse 9, that the children will have to answer for it to God, if they do not listen to the instruction of their teachers, Luke xii. 47, 48:—from verse 10, that when men are giving way to sin, they are very apt to throw the blame of it upon any one else, or even upon God Himself, Gen. iii. 12, 13:—from verse 11, that God desires every sinner to turn, and is willing to save him, Hosea xi. 8, 9; xiv. 1—4:—from verses 12, 13, that sin is hateful in the sight of God, who will certainly

punish it, wherever it be found, Hab. i. 13; Rom. ii. 6—12:—from verses 14—16, that those who really turn to God will be living a holy life, Rom. vi. 1, 2; 2 Cor. v. 17: and from verse 20, that those who complain of God's dealings with them, will one day see that He has treated them better han they deserved, Lam. iii. 39.

It is to be remarked that, in this Chapter, the change which takes place in a man's heart is described by the outward effects it produces on his life; it is by its fruits that the tree is known. In Matt. xxv. 31—46, the same test is given by our Lord, but we are never to suppose that any one can obtain pardon and salvation by his own altered character or conduct; for we are distinctly taught in other parts of Scripture that the sinner can only be pardoned through faith in Christ and by His merits, and not by any works or deservings of his own. See Gal. ii. 16; Eph. ii. 8, 9; Tit. iii. 5—7.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 2.—*The Sword*-war, as this is the chief instrument used in war. *Their Coasts*—their country or borders; not necessarily the *sea*-coast, as the word now generally signifies. Compare Matt. ii. 16.

Verse 6.—*His blood will I require*; the watchman shall be answerable for it. See 1 Kings xx. 39.

Verse 7.—*At my mouth*; directly from me. God made known to the inspired prophets the very words they were to speak.

Verse 9.—*Hast delivered thy soul*; art free from guilt on his account.

Verse 10.—*Pine away in them*; sink under the effect of them, without having power to escape.

Verse 13.—*Trust to his own righteousness*; think himself to be safe because he has been living as a servant of God, or that the merit of past good works will counterbalance present evil deeds.

Verse 14.—*Thou shalt surely die*; that is, if he goes on in sin. All God's warnings are conditional. See Jonah iii.

Verse 15.—*Restore the pledge*; if clothes were given in pledge by a poor man to his creditor, the law of Moses required that they should be restored to him before sunset. See Deut. xxiv. 12, 13.

APPLICATION.—What will become of us when all our thoughts, words, and actions are examined by a God of strict justice and holiness? Have we sought and obtained pardon from the only Saviour? And are we showing by our daily conduct that we are taught and guided by His Holy Spirit?

LESSON VI.—THE GOODNESS OF GOD, PSALM CVII.

THE Psalmist calls upon all men to praise God for His goodness to them. God is good to all, Ps. cxlv. 9. He is our Maker and our Preserver, and the gifts of His providence are common to all mankind. The sunshine and the rain, the day and the night, the returning seasons, and the productive powers of the earth, are bestowed alike on the evil and the good, Matt. v. 45; Luke vi. 35. His providential goodness is not confined to any particular country or place, nor to any favoured class of creatures, Ps. lxv; Acts xvii. 25; James i. 17. Wherever we go, the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord, Ps. xxxiii.

Notice the remarkable adaptation of the habits of men and animals to the different climates in which they may live. Thus, in the desert, God provides the

camel, of all animals the most suited to traverse its sandy wastes; whilst in the frozen regions near the poles, where the camel and the horse could not exist, the rein-deer admirably supplies their place. In our own country, see how God provides for the wants of all. The corn, fruits, and vegetables year by year produced, the minerals and metals dug from the earth, and the timber which springs out of it, the beasts, and birds, and fishes for our sustenance, are all furnished by His Almighty power. All things proclaim that the God of nature is good.

The Psalmist sets forth many special instances in which God's providential care is displayed. *Redemption from captivity* (verse 2). We know in our day but little of such an affliction, but though free from earthly restraint, we, alas! are captives of Satan. Have we been bought back by the precious blood of Christ? If so, then indeed we shall have cause to praise God, not only for His providential care, but for His redeeming love. If not, let us pray that we may become the freemen of the Lord. *Guidance in perilous journeys* (verses 3—9.) This passage seems descriptive of a caravan crossing a desert, a fitting emblem of our journey through this life. May we ever remember that this is not our home, and pray to God so to lead us through this life that we finally lose not the life eternal. *Deliverance from prison* (verses 10—16.) This would apply with peculiar force to the Jewish mind, reminding them of their abject slavery in Egypt and their captivity in Babylon; and to us it is a picture of our miserable state by nature, brought by sin under the condemnation of God's holy law, and fast bound by Satan in the chain of our lusts, John viii. 34. *Recovery from sickness* (verses 17—20.) Sickness and death are the consequences of sin. By our wickedness we provoke God to plague us with divers diseases and sundry kinds of death. Sin itself is fitly represented as a disease, as a leprosy of the soul, incurable by human art. *Preservation when in danger of shipwreck* (verses 23—32.) This passage is peculiarly forcible, and expresses the helplessness of all man's skill when God "raiseth the stormy wind." The Psalmist concludes his exhortations to praise with a recital of more general instances of the goodness of God.

The principal lesson to be learnt is, that God is good to all His creatures, to the wicked and the good. Our next lesson will treat of the especial mercy and favour of God towards His people, as the God of all grace; in this we see His goodness to all, as the God of providence. Observe how the Bible teaches us to discover and acknowledge God's overruling hand in those things which unbelief ascribes to chance or second causes, such as the skill of the physician or of the mariner. Whatever means God uses, to Him all the glory is due.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 2.—*Redeemed* literally "bought back," as prisoners taken in battle were ransomed or redeemed. The reference here is to the deliverance of the Jews from captivity.

Verse 4.—*Wilderness*; a wild or desert place. There were many such in that part of the world in which Judæa was situated, particularly the wilderness in which the Israelites wandered for forty years. (Numb. xi.—xvi.)

Verse 10.—*Bound in affliction and iron*; fettered with iron chains and surrounded with bars and bolts; thus increasing their misery through the impossibility of escape.

Verse 11.—*Contemned*, despised.

Verse 19.—*He saveth*; in the original, "He will save," implying encouragement to all who feel their misery to call upon God. (James v. 14—15.)

Verse 26.—*Their soul is melted*; a powerful expression to convey the extent of their fear and despair. (Acts xxvii. 20.)

Verse 39.—*Minished*, or diminished, reduced.

APPLICATION.—God's goodness should excite our praise. If we are dependent on Him for all our comforts, how can we live in forgetfulness of and unthankfulness towards Him? (Rom. ii. 4.)

LESSON VII.—GOD'S ESPECIAL GOODNESS TO HIS PEOPLE.—JOHN XVII.

In the preceding lesson we saw the goodness of God to all His creatures, as the God of Providence relieving their distresses and supplying their temporal wants; we now have to speak of God's especial love to His own people, to those who serve Him in spirit and in truth, John iv. 24. Observe that those gifts of God which are common to all mankind, such as food, health, and riches, do not in themselves constitute happiness. How many who enjoy all these blessings are unhappy and miserable? Even were it otherwise, contrast the shortness of their duration with the eternal bliss laid up for God's servants. But for those who, once far off, have been brought near by the blood of Christ, God, as the God of all grace, has far richer gifts in store. It is not promised that they shall be rich or great, or learned or renowned; nor is it necessary that they should be, for worldly prosperity has nothing to do with real happiness. Contrast Dives and Lazarus, Luke xvi. 19—31. True happiness consists in the consciousness of pardon through the blood of the Redeemer, and such happiness the world can never know.

The greatest manifestation of God's love to men was sending His Son to die for them, John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9. When we were yet sinners Christ died for us, Rom. v. 8. To suffer for a friend would be a great mark of love, but to die for him, nay, to die for an enemy (Rom. v. 7), how can we conceive such love? Yet this was the only mode in which mercy and truth, righteousness and peace could meet together, Ps. lxxxv. 10; in which God could be just, and yet the justifier of sinful man (Rom. iii. 26). Great, indeed, is the love which God has for His people: and whatever their position or circumstances in this life, they may rest assured that He has provided them a sufficiency for their worldly good, Rom. viii. 32. Elijah fed by ravens at the brook, 1 Kings xvii. 3—6; Daniel in the den of lions (Dan. vi. 16, 22), supported by God's favour, were happier far than Ahab or Darius in their royal palaces. God gives His people pardon through Christ (Eph. i. 7; 1 John i. 7), and peace the consequence of pardon, which cannot really exist without it, Ps. xxxii. 1, 2; Is. xxvi. 3. He gives them grace to love and serve Him here, and He will give them eternal glory hereafter, John xiv. 2—3, xvii. 2.

Christ's love for His people is strikingly displayed in this chapter. He was about to suffer a cruel and shameful death, and as man to endure God's wrath and indignation against sin; and yet His thoughts were not on Himself but on his servants. His Father's glory (verse 1—5) and His people's safety (verse 6—26) were the subject of His earnest supplications. This prayer contains all the chief points in the scheme of redemption. Christ's eternal glory with the Father, verses 5, 24; His union with the Father, verses 10, 11, 21, 22; His mission from the Father, verses 3, 8, 18, 21, 25; the object of that mission, man's salvation, verse 2; its completion, verse 4. It contains likewise the Christian's duties; holiness, verses 15—17; and love to God (verse 26) and man, verses 11, 21, 22.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 1. — *Glorify thy Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee.* The Father glorified Christ by supporting His human nature throughout His sufferings; by the miracles and wonderful events attending His crucifixion; by the conversion of the penitent thief; by the testimonies borne to Him by Pilate and the centurion; by the fulfilment of ancient types and prophecies in Him; by the acceptance of His sacrifice; by His resurrection and ascension, and His exaltation to the mediatorial throne. The Son glorified the Father in the display of His justice, holiness, truth, and mercy, and in magnifying His law and government, both in His humiliation and in the glory which followed it.

Verse 2.—Christ as Mediator has the government of the whole world put into His hand, John iii. 35; Ps. ii. 7, 8; Matt. xxviii. 18.

Verse 6.—*Manifested*; shown forth, made known. *Kept thy word*; obeyed thy commandments. See chap. xv. 14.

Verse 9.—*The World*, that is, the wicked as such, and as opposed to the elect, have no interest in Christ's intercession; but no contrite sinner, however degraded, can be included amongst "the world."

Verse 12.—*The son of perdition*, Judas Iscariot. *The Scripture*, Ps. cix. 6—19.

Verse 16.—Observe the character of Christ's people.

Verse 19.—*Sanctify* here means to set apart, and not to *make* holy as in verse 17. Christ had been "sanctified" (chap. x. 36), on His being sent into the world. He would have his disciples set apart in like manner for the office they derived from Him.

APPLICATION.—Are we the subjects of this especial love of God?

LESSON VIII.—GOD THE SOURCE OF WISDOM, PROVERBS VIII.

Wisdom may be classed under two heads, worldly and heavenly. Both are from God. He giveth men power and ability to get wealth, Deut. viii. 18. He endows them with intellectual faculties; learning, skill, and ingenuity are from Him. But none can be really called wise except those who seek the wisdom that is from above, James iii. 17. The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, Job xxviii. 28; Ps. cxi. 10. Worldly wisdom can only benefit our bodies; heavenly wisdom ensures the happiness of our souls. Worldly wisdom can profit us only in time; heavenly wisdom affects us throughout eternity.

God is all-wise in Himself, Dan. ii. 20. Creation proclaims this, Ps. civ. 24; cxxxvi. 5; Prov. iii. 19, 20; Jer. x 12. Redemption displays it, Eph. iii. 10; Col. ii. 3. God promises also to impart wisdom to all who pray for it, James i. 5 6. See an example of such prayer answered in Solomon, 2 Chron. i. 7—12. The word of God is the channel of the communication of wisdom, Ps. xix. 7; cxix. 33, 34, 105; there we may learn our duty towards God and man, and how to live in this life, so that we may live for ever in the world to come.

The chapter for the lesson introduces Wisdom (verses 1—11) as earnestly calling to the sons of men to hearken to her instructions. We cannot plead ignorance, for if we do, it is wilful, for "Doth not wisdom cry?" have we not the word of God to enlighten us, and the ordinances of God to instruct us? By Wisdom, Christ and the doctrine of his Gospel are generally understood, and the expressions used in verses 2, 3, imply the universality of the offers of the Gospel; in verses 10, 11 the value of true wisdom is forcibly expressed, see Mark viii. 36; and it is repre-

sented as easy to be known and understood, that none may have excuse for ignorance; and as worthy to be embraced, that none may have excuse for carelessness. The remainder of the chapter seems particularly to apply to the Lord Jesus Christ. All the blessings of the Gospel were purchased for us by Him. He would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim. ii. 3—6. From all eternity one with the Father, the Creator and Lord of all, having displayed His power and goodness in the formation of the heavens and the earth, He stooped to take upon Him the form of a servant for us men and for our salvation. Whilst on earth He taught as never man taught (Matt. vii. 29) and now in His word and by His ordinances, He offers to teach us, Matt. xi. 29. Shall we refuse to learn of Him who thus speaketh from heaven? Heb. xii. 25.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 4.—*Sons of man*; all, of every country and nation, not to the seed of Abraham or the sons of Israel, but the whole of Adam's race.

Verse 8.—Christ is a faithful witness, His word is truth, John iii. 11.

Verses 10, 11.—*Gold, silver, rubies*, put for the most precious things of the earth.

Verse 13.—*Arrogancy*; haughtiness, pride. *The froward mouth*; unkind and unjust words destroy the peace of mankind, therefore God hates them.

Verse 17.—*Early*; see in this the special blessing promised to youthful piety.

Verse 18.—*Durable*; lasting, certain. Such are "the unsearchable riches of Christ," Eph. iii. 8; see Matt. vi. 19—21.

Verse 22, 23.—The whole plan of creation and providence was formed in relation to Christ, see John i. 1—4.

Verse 34.—The Word of God and the places where the Gospel is faithfully preached and taught, are the gates and "the posts of the doors" of wisdom. Observe, we are thus to watch *daily*.

Verse 36.—*Wrongeth his own soul*; those who wilfully reject the offers of salvation destroy their own souls; see Ezek. xviii. 30—32.

APPLICATION.—God is the source of wisdom, and is willing to impart it to us: are we seeking it from Him?

LESSON IX.—THE SCRIPTURES, THE REVEALED WILL OF GOD.—2 CHRON. XXXIV.

God, as creator and governor of the world, has a right to rule over and direct his creatures. In old times, He spake to man through His prophets by immediate revelation, 2 Pet. i. 21. Afterwards, He made known His will in the Holy Scriptures, that His creatures might know wherein they had gone wrong, the way to pardon and restoration, and also to keep them from falling in the future, and to guide them onward to eternal glory.

In this lesson we have a history of the discovery of the Book of the Law in the Temple. The Jews, when Josiah came to the throne, were sunk into a miserable state of idolatry and sin. The good king Hezekiah had been succeeded by his wicked (though afterwards repentant) son Manasseh, whose son Amon was still worse than his father, and at length the very existence of the true and pure word of God was unknown or forgotten. Josiah was Amon's son, but he did not follow his example. God raised him up as a witness for Himself in the midst

of His sinful people, as had been foretold upwards of three hundred years before, 1 Kings xiii. 2. He was very young when he came to the throne, but he was old enough to serve God. He must have had many difficulties to encounter, probably much ridicule to bear; but the God whom he served gave him grace to stand steadfast in his fear. Josiah was not satisfied with serving God himself, he did his utmost to make his people serve Him too. It is the duty of all to do what they can to promote the glory of God. All,—the youngest, the poorest,—have some influence, far more than we generally think.

In repairing the Temple, the Word of God was found. Josiah at once took all the means in his power to instruct the people in the commandments of the Lord, himself solemnly undertaking with all his heart to perform, so far as he was enabled to do so, the words of the covenant which were written in the Book. We have the Bible; it shows us the only Saviour, John i. 45; v. 39; Acts x. 43; xviii. 28. Do we make it our constant study? Are we resolved, and, by God's help, are we striving to obey its commandments? Oh, that we may indeed do so! For Holy Scripture contains *all things* necessary to salvation, 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16; Rom. xv. 4. We may or may not be learned in the wisdom of the world, but we *must* acquire that wisdom of which the fear of the Lord is the beginning, and that can only be found in the Bible. See what David thought of it, Ps. cxix. 103, 105, 127; it must be the same with us. The world is like a dark place, and the Bible is the light to show us the path to heaven.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 2.—*David his father: i. e.*, his forefather. His father was Amon.

Verses 3—5.—Thus was exactly fulfilled the prediction in 1 Kings xiii. 2.

Verse 6.—Though Shalmanezer had carried away the chief part of the ten tribes, yet a considerable number still remained, and over them Josiah evidently had authority.

Verse 8.—"The house" of God.

Verse 11.—Through long neglect, the Temple had become much dilapidated since it was repaired in the days of Joash, which, the Jews say, was two hundred and eighteen years before this time.

Verse 14.—Moses, by God's command, had laid up a copy of the law by the ark, Deut. xxxi. 24—26. Most probably it had been hidden in some secret place of the Temple to preserve it from the impious fury of the idolatrous kings. Refer to Jehoiakim's conduct, Jerem. xxxvi. 23.

Verse 19.—Rending the clothes was a sign of grief.

Verse 30.—*Great and small.* All are interested in the precepts and the promises of the Bible. The young and the old, the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant.

APPLICATION.—Those who love God prize and delight in His holy Word as their greatest treasure. What is our own experience?

LESSON X.—MAN CREATED HOLY AND HAPPY.—GEN. I, 26—31, and II.

In our first Lesson we saw that God made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them; we now come to the creation of man.

All things that God made were very good,—good in their nature, good for their purpose, Gen. i. 31. God created man holy and happy, Eccles. vii. 29; his body indeed out of the dust of the earth, Gen. ii. 7, but his soul after the image of God, Gen.

i. 27. There is no real happiness except in real holiness, Heb. xii. 14. A wicked man is never truly happy even in this life, for the commission of sin yields no real pleasure, and a fearful anticipation of judgment to come constantly weighs upon his mind, casting out all the enjoyment of even lawful pursuits. Whilst the man who, in humble dependence upon Divine grace, seeks to live each day of his life to God's glory, can feel that, whatever his lot in this life, a merciful and wise Hand has appointed it, and looks forward, in the world to come, to joys which it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive, 1 Cor. ii. 9. So long as man retained the image of God, in which he was created, he was perfectly happy. In heaven we shall regain the image of God which we have lost, 1 Cor. xv. 49; 1 John iii. 2.

Everything was prepared for Adam's use before he was made. He was far superior to all other created beings, in being gifted with reason, memory, understanding, speech, and endowed with an immortal soul. Thus he was the more fitted to serve and glorify God, for he could render to Him an intelligent service. Placed in the beautiful garden of Eden, with everything that he could desire springing up around him, without labour or toil, with Eve for his companion, and God for his friend, how happy must Adam have been! All was love and happiness; the animals, even those which we now know as beasts of prey, dwelt together in peace and safety; there was no death nor suffering nor sickness, for these are the results of sin. God formed Adam's body, and then breathed into him the breath of life, Gen. ii. 7. So now we are by nature dead until God sends His Holy Spirit to quicken and to sanctify us, Eph. ii. 1, and not till then can we serve and glorify Him.

Observe that even in their state of innocence, Adam and Eve had the Sabbath, on which, resting from their ordinary employment of dressing and keeping the garden, they were especially required to remember their Creator and to praise Him. The rest of the Sabbath is not to be idleness. The rest of heaven consists in serving God without weariness, and our Sabbaths on earth are earnests of eternal Sabbaths in the world to come.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—CHAPTER I.—Verse 26.—"Let us," "in our image;" this language implies consultation, and proves the plurality of persons in the Godhead. *Dominion*; power, authority. This we see constantly fulfilled in the subjection to the animals to man.

Verse 28.—*Replenish*, fill; *subdue*, make it fit for habitation by bringing under or driving away wild beasts.

CHAPTER II.—Verse 1.—*All the host of them*; all creatures in heaven and in earth; they are called a host because of their vast variety and excellent order.

Verse 2.—*Rested*; ceased to create; the word does not imply weariness on God's part, but only that He had completed His design and regarded it with satisfaction.

Verse 4.—*These are the generations*, etc.; *i. e.*, this is a faithful account of the creation of the original of the world.

Verse 8.—*Eastward*, *i. e.* of Canaan, or the wilderness, where Moses wrote this book. *Eden* signifies pleasure.

Verse 9.—*The tree of life*, represented that immortal life which God intended to bestow upon man, and by eating of its fruit, life and happiness were assured to Adam so long as he continued obedient. *The tree of knowledge* was probably so called, because by the prohibition of its fruit God's will was *made known* to man, or some think the name was given to it afterwards, because Satan pretended it would make them wise, chap. iii. 5. When they eat of it, they became conscious of good *and evil*.

Verse 12.—*Bdellium*, most probably pearl, though some think an aromatic gum or amber.

Verse 14.—*Hiddekel*, Tigris; the names of this river and of Euphrates, fix the position of the garden in Mesopotamia. *Pison* and *Gihon* were the channels into which the Euphrates, after its conjunction with the Tigris, is again divided.

Verse 15.—Observe that even in Paradise God saw that employment was good for man.

Verse 18.—*An help meet for him*; a companion fit for him.

APPLICATION.—Are we fulfilling the end of our creation,—the glory of God?

LESSON XI.—THE FALL; GEN. III.

In our last lesson we left Adam and Eve in Paradise, enjoying the blessings God had bestowed on them: their only employment being to tend the beautiful garden in which they lived, Gen. ii. 15. Fatigue, sickness and death, were as yet unknown to them, iii. 19; their dominion was undisputed over the living tribes around, ii. 19; one easy command was all they had to obey, ii. 16, 17.

How they came to disobey this was owing—

1st. To the *malice of the devil*. He is here called *subtle*; and our Saviour (John viii. 44) gives him the names of *murderer* and *liar*. He proved himself all these at the fall. His enmity probably arose from envy of the happiness of Adam and Eve; his own condition as a defeated rebel being unutterably miserable, 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6; Rev. xii. 7—9.

2nd. But Satan's hatred would have been powerless to do man any harm, had it not been for *the evil passions*, which that wicked one so craftily called out. He appealed to the curiosity, pride, discontent, and unbelief of his nature, and at once those mischievous propensities sprang up in answer to his call. He awoke in an instant in Eve's mind the lust of the flesh ("she saw the tree was good for food"), the lust of the eyes ("that it was pleasant to the eyes"), and the pride of life ("and a tree to be desired to make one wise"). Eve *had* the knowledge of "good," she coveted that of "evil" also; but with the *knowledge* came the *love* of it. The victory over Adam, when Eve was conquered, was easily won, by means of those very affections which God had given only for his good. See St. James's definition of temptation,—Satan the enticer, drawing us by means of our evil dispositions, i. 14.

The sad *results* of this first sin were, labour to Adam (ver. 17—19), suffering to Eve (ver. 16), and death to both, ver. 19; and in all these, we, their posterity, share. The universal corruption of our nature was the consequence. Temptations from without only appeal to our own sinful desires within. Ruin to soul and body was the consequence of the fall, sin henceforth clinging to the former, death to the latter, Rom. v. 12. And but for a Saviour's love, this ruin would have been irretrievable, 1 Cor. xv. 22.

Let us never then think there can be such a thing as a *little sin*. The least is disobedience, and disobedience involves the whole principle of evil, James ii. 10. Let us keep in mind, too, how weak we are (Matt. xxvi. 41), and how open to temptation, 1 Pet. v. 8. If Adam and Eve could not resist it, in a state of inno-

cence, how can we, whose hearts are evil by inheritance and habit too? It can only be met in God's strength, Matt, iv. 4, 7, 10.

Mark other lesser results of the fall, as the introduction of shame, fear and discord (verses 7, 8, 12), into a world where all had before been confidence and love.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 1.—*Subtle*; deceitful, cunning. This is the natural character of the serpent, and fitted him well to be Satan's agent. Subtlety, is now, as then, Satan's great strength, 2 Cor. xi. 3.

Verse 5.—*Knowing good and evil.* It is indeed true they would learn evil by their disobedience; hitherto they had known only good. But this was a curse and not a blessing.

Verse 6.—She began with *looking*, she ended with becoming her husband's tempter,—and each step of the downward path is traced in this verse.

Verse 13.—*Beguiled*; deceived, enticed.

Verse 14.—The serpent, as Satan's instrument, deservedly shared his punishment.

Verse 15.—*Thee*, Satan himself; *thy seed*, bad men; called (Matt. xiii. 38) the children of the wicked one. *The woman*, Eve; *her seed*, the future Saviour. In the sufferings and death of Christ, called by Him (Luke xxii. 53) the "hour" and "power of darkness," Satan was allowed to "bruise His heel"—to exercise a certain degree of power over the seed of the woman. In His glorious resurrection, He bruised Satan's head; giving the death-blow to his power, by His victory over the grave, 2 Tim. i. 10. Thus in the midst of judgment God remembered mercy.

Verse 18.—Probably thorns and thistles were unknown in the garden of Eden. The herb of the field, requiring toil both to cultivate and prepare, was to be substituted for the fruit of the trees, which had hitherto been man's only food.

Verse 19.—Compare Satan's flattering words, "ye shall be as gods" (ver. 5), with the startling truth God tells them here, "*dust* thou art."

Verse 20.—*Eve* means living.

Verse 21.—It has been thought that these were skins of animals slain in sacrifice, then first instituted by God's command to ratify the covenant in the promised Redeemer.

Verse 22.—*One of us*; compare Gen. i. 26; another intimation of the Trinity. To *live for ever* in a world of sin and suffering would have been the greatest punishment of all.

Verse 24.—*Flaming sword* may be rendered *pointed* or *sword-like flame*; corresponding to the burning bush, the Shechinah, and the fiery tongues of the day of Pentecost; all symbols of the Divine presence. *To keep the way of the tree of life.* This was to show us that henceforth eternal life was never to be attained by any efforts of our own, but only by God's free grace, Rom. iii. 23, 24.

APPLICATION.—Satan is strong; our hearts are weak. Are we seeking from above strength to resist him? Eph. vi. 11, 12.

LESSON XII—THE FALL UNIVERSAL.—GEN. VI.

THIS lesson gives an account of the universal spread of wickedness in the time of Noah, and shows the general corruption of man's nature. In the last, we saw the first workings of evil in man: pride, discontent, and unbelief, producing disobedience. Each of these bad dispositions, with many others, springing from or connected with them, we inherit from Adam and Eve as universally as we do

their form of body and faculties of mind, Rom. v. 12; Gal. iii. 22. It is easy to trace the branches springing from these evil roots:—from pride, its kindred sins, ambition, vanity etc.; from discontent, all kinds of unlawful desires and wishes, envy, theft, murder, etc.; from unbelief forget, fulness of God, disregard of His word, His day, His promises, His threatenings, Ps. ix. 17; Isaiah lix. 2. This inherited evil is what is called original sin, which is not completely overcome even in those who are regenerated.

But besides this (Job xv. 14; Ps. li. 5; Eph. ii. 1—3), we are perpetually incurring a large amount of actual guilt in thought, word, and deed, Eccles. vii. 20, and each generation is multiplying the wickedness of the fallen race. These constant indications of remaining corruption are a source of anxiety to the true Christian, but God enables him to overcome them. See Rom. vii. 18, 25; 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.

When we think even of our own sins alone, and try to behold the whole world as it must appear in the eyes of that Holy God "in whose sight the whole heavens are not clean" (Job. xv. 15), may we not well marvel at His forbearance in sparing it in spite of all? still filling with food and gladness the hearts of those who are daily offending Him more and more (Matt. v. 45; Acts xiv. 17.)

Since the fall, the corruption of man's nature has affected every part of His nature. His *heart* is sinful, verse 5; Ps. lviii. 2; Jer. xvii. 9; Matt. xv. 19. His *understanding* is dark, Jer. iv. 22; Eph. iv. 18. His *memory* is perverted, Ps. lxxviii. 10, 11, 42. His *will* is opposed to God, Ps. lxxxi. 11; Jer. v. 3. His *affections* are alienated from God, John iii. 19; Rom. i. 28; viii. 7. His tongue (James iii. 5—9),—eyes and ears (Matt. xiii. 13, 14),—hands (Is. lix. 3), feet (Is. lix. 7), are instruments of disobedience. And this corruption exists not in some only, or even most of the sons of Adam; it is spread over the entire human race, Ps. xiv. 1—3; Prov. xx. 9; Is. lxiv. 6, 7.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 2.—*Sons of God.* Probably the posterity of Seth, worshippers of the true God, Gen. iv. 26. *Daughters of men, i.e.,* of the ungodly race of Cain. This union of the godly with the ungodly is mentioned as a reason for the destruction of *all* save Noah and his family. Mixing with evil doers is shown here as elsewhere to be very displeasing in the sight of God; see Deut. vii. 3, 4; 1 Kings xi. 1—11.

Verse 3.—*Yet his days*; one hundred and twenty years elapsed between the resolve and the fulfilment of it, 1 Pet. iii. 20. So great was the long-suffering of God.

Verse 4.—*Giants*; in violence, and probably in stature also.

Verse 5.—When the season of repentance was expired. Not only the *practices* of men were evil, but their *principles* (see the marginal reference).

Verse 6.—*Repented.* God could not actually repent, for His works are known to Him from the beginning. The word is used to express a change of dispensations.

Verse 7.—*Destroy*; literally, wipe off; see 2 Kings xxi. 13; 2 Pet. ii. 4, 5.

Verse 9.—*Perfect*; sincere or upright (as in margin). The word signifies throughout the Old Testament, not absolute perfection, but the offering of a *whole* heart, an *undivided* service.

Verse 11.—Men were irreligious towards God, and unjust towards one another.

Verse 14.—*Ark*, mentioned in Exod. ii. 3, signifies to dwell or inhabit, and may denote here a house or dwelling. *Gopher*, or cypress wood, abounded in Babylonia, as did bitumen, or pitch.

Verse 15, 16.—The ark was not made like a ship, with a sharpend to cut the

waves, but broad at both ends, with a roof rather sloping. A cubit measures eighteen inches, and it is calculated that the ark would hold eighteen times as much as the largest man of war. Probably the lowest of the three stages was for the larger animals, the second for provisions, the third for Noah and his family, and the birds and small animals. The "rooms" may have been cells, to separate the kinds.

Verse 18.—*Covenant*, or agreement. The first was with Adam, the conditions of which he broke; this is one altogether of mercy, and a type of that of the Gospel.

Verse 22.—*Thus did Noah:* see both his obedience and faith; they were great and wonderful, when we consider that one hundred years passed away while he was building, without a sign of the coming judgment, and that he was surrounded by those who mocked at his undertaking and disbelieved God's warning, Heb. xi. 7.

APPLICATION.—We have all wandered from the right way, and done wickedly; but though fallen, our state is not hopeless. See Rom. v. 6; Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.

LESSON XIII.—THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN.—GEN. VII.

GOD'S holiness and justice could not suffer such a state of things as was described in the last chapter to go on without a check. The judgment was long delayed, but it came at last. Learn hence the guilt and folly of those whose inward thought is, "God hath forgotten, He hideth away His face, He will never see it," Ps. x. 11; 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4. God's hatred of sin is as great now as it was then, for holiness and justice are His attributes for ever. He calls sin, "this abominable thing that I hate," Jer. xliv. 4. Sin places man in the position of an enemy of God, Col. i. 21; and what a fearful position this is! Man, the worm, arrayed against Omnipotence! Is. xlv. 9.

God's principal reckoning with sinners will be at the great day of account; his sorest judgments are reserved for another world, Ps. ix. 17; Matt. xiii. 30; 2 Pet. ii. 9; Rev. xx. 15. But even in this world His enemies have a foretaste of the misery in store for them, Rom. i. 18; Col. iii. 6; Eph. v. 6. We know how surely sins of intemperance, extravagance, and dishonesty bring their own punishment of disease, want, and disgrace. And those of God's enemies, who are so more in heart than in outward act, fair-seeming to the eyes of men, yet black with unforgiven sin in the sight of a Holy God, have their sufferings too. They are living without God in the world, and therefore without hope, Eph. ii. 12. They may be gay, but they cannot know *peace*, Is. xlviii. 22. They cannot bear to be alone, for then they are all the more conscious of the presence of an offended God; they have no comfort in their sorrows, and they dread the very name of death, while their sinful pleasures fail to give them real happiness in their very enjoyment. And when death comes, to what does it lead? To an eternity of remorse (Matt. xxv. 41), torment (Luke xvi. 24), and despair, Mark ix. 44. They never sought the benefits of Christ's salvation, and would not accept the mercy offered to them in Him.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 2.—The distinction between clean and unclean beasts here made, is one of many proofs that a great part of the law afterwards solemnly given through Moses, was observed by the Patriarchs. (Compare chap. xiv. 20, with Num. xviii. 21, 24; and chap. ix. 4, with Lev. xvii. 10). *By sevens*, that there might be enough for sacrifices.

Verse 11.—The waters of the sea burst their barriers, and those of the sky descended not in rain, but floods, or cataracts.

Verse 16.—*The Lord shut him in*, not only securing Noah from danger, but shutting out those who might, when too late, seek to enter into the ark.

Verse 17, 18.—At the end of forty days, the waters were just high enough to float the ark.

Verse 20.—*Fifteen cubits*, twenty-two feet and a half above the mountains. The highest mountain is about four miles in elevation.

Verse 21, 22.—The fossil remains of sea-fish and shells, which are found in various parts of the world, even in high hills, far from the sea, demonstrate the truth of the Scripture testimony respecting the Deluge.

APPLICATION.—Since misery in this world and in the next are the consequences of sin, and it is hateful to our God, let us watch and pray against it. Matt. x. 28; xxiv. 37—39.

LESSON XIV.—THE LOVE OF GOD TO SINNERS.—EPHES. II.

WE have read of God's hatred of sin, and found, from Scripture and experience, that the world is full of sin,—that we are all, in the forcible language of this chapter, by nature, "dead in trespasses and sins." We now are to see how God loves the sinner, while He hates the sin, Ezek. xviii. 23, 31, 32; xxxiii. 11; 2 Pet. iii. 9. He never could have loved us had He waited for our love first, John vi. 44; xv. 16. Like Adam, we were estranged from Him, fearful of Him, by reason of our sin. "When we were enemies," Rom. v. 10, "even when we were dead in sins (Ephes. ii. 5) He gave His Son to die for us. If we now love Him, it can only be "because He first loved us," 1 John iv. 10, 19.

And with what love! So free and undeserved—so full of compassion and pity—so patient and so long-suffering—so great and constant—an *everlasting* love. Not like ours to one another, which costs us little trouble, and yields us much happiness; but love to those who had nothing to give in return, Job. xxii. 2, 3; nay, more, who were at enmity with Him, Rom. v. 8; viii. 7; love, too, which cost Him no less a sacrifice than the life of His only and well-beloved Son, Matt. i. 21; John iii. 16; Rom. viii. 32; 1 John iv. 9. Well may St. John exclaim—"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us!" Well may we take up David's words—"Is this the manner of man, O Lord God?" 2 Sam. vii. 19.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 1—3, and 11, 12, describe our state by nature; the remaining parts of the chapter our state in Christ.

Verse 1.—*Quickened*; brought to life; *dead*, to all that concerned the spiritual and eternal world.

Verse 2.—Satan, here called the prince of the power of the air, is called (John xii. 31) "the prince of this world." All in whom he works are his subjects, but evil spirits abide "in the air" and are his agents of mischief.

Verse 3.—*Conversation*, course of life, fulfilling the desires of a corrupt nature. *Children of wrath*, worthy of wrath.

Verse 5, 6.—Christ's people are already risen, already glorified, in Him their Head.

Verse 7.—*The ages to come.* Henceforth God's love to man was to be more fully displayed, Luke xvi. 16; Titus iii. 4, 5.

Verse 8, 9.—Grace, or God's free mercy, is the cause, faith the means, and works (verse 10), the evidence, of salvation.

Verse 10.—Here works, which were excluded in verse 9 from any share in the sinner's salvation, are put in their right place, as his bounden duty, *being saved*. God's purpose in converting us to Himself, in Christ, is that we should lead holy lives.

Verse 11, 12.—The former state of the Ephesians, as Gentiles, is set before them, to magnify God's love. Is not this description true also of all who do not love Christ, and live without God in their thoughts? Is it not true of us in the past, if not now?

Verse 13, 14.—Allusions to the outer court of the Gentiles in the temple, and to the nearness of the Jews to the mercy-seat there.

Verse 15.—*Enmity, i. e.*, the cause of enmity between the Jew and Gentile, which was the ceremonial law. The Gospel brought peace.

Verse 16.—Jews and Gentiles, having been reconciled to each other, are next reconciled to God, and in both cases the Cross of Christ is the bond of union.

Verse 18.—The distinct offices and persons of the blessed Trinity are all mentioned here. *We both*, those far off and those nigh, Jews and Gentiles. How great the privilege to be admitted into the family of God, not as strangers, but as living members of it—fellow-citizens with His people!

Verses 19—22.—A beautiful description of the union brought about by Christ's death, under the figure of a temple, with the truth of both dispensations as its base, living Christians its stones, Christ its support and framework, the Holy Spirit its builder, the glory of God its object.

APPLICATION.—Ought such love to be neglected or despised?

The Lecture.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ORGANIZATION.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED IN TRINITY SCHOOLS, PLATT, NEAR MANCHESTER, BY MR. JAMES COLLINGE.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ORGANIZATION is yet a debatable topic. It will, therefore, be conceded, that they who speak should have the fullest liberty of speech, whilst they who hear should be allowed to criticise, always bearing in mind that criticism is not a captious, but a liberal act. When discussing controverted points we should proceed in the spirit of that weighty sentiment,—"In essentials there should be union, in non-essentials there should be liberty, and in everything there should be charity." If Sunday schools are but necessary evils, and not permanent institutions, as some affirm, why should we trouble ourselves about them? But if they deserve attention, we must be convinced not only of their expediency, but also of their Scriptural character and origin. Before we can comprehend and appreciate their organization in detail, we must feel that they are adapted to the constitution and course of nature, as

seen in the present order of things. Every biblical student is aware, that Sabbath schools in all their essential features existed at least 3,000 years before the time of Raikes. In the xxxi. chap. of Deut., it is written,—"Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the word of this law. And that their children, which have not known anything, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it."

Here are all the elements of a Sunday school—here are Bible classes for all, for infants that have not known anything, for children of larger growth, and even for adults and aliens. In the days of Abraham, of Moses, and the Bereans, there was a Sabbath school in every Jewish home, not for the family alone, but for the stranger within the gates. The strangers of the Jewish system were in a minority, and by express command they were taken into the Sabbath school of the family.

Subsequently to the Reformation in the sixteenth century, the wide territory between the Romish and Protestant Churches, was filled with indifferent, profane, and unbelieving multitudes. The outcasts and the strangers were then in the majority, and no longer could the Sunday school in the family bring them under its influence. Led by the hand of God, Robert Raikes took the initiatory step in bringing out the ark of the Sunday school, which had been kept for ages in the tabernacle of home, and carried it into the realm of darkness, where it shed new home-like and heaven-directed light, and where, ever since, it has, under new circumstances, been fulfilling its old mission on behalf of the stranger and alien. And *now*, it is still the old family Sunday school, and the old Bible searching circle, which has led thousands into the knowledge and love of God's Word.

Such being our estimate of the Sunday school, as a divinely authorised institution, our subject assumes a magnitude which time can never develop, and which eternity alone can fully unfold. When considering educational organization, we should remember that between public institutions and our domestic relationships, there is a most intimate connection. Indeed, so close is the contact, that the character, tone, and taste of society, in every country, are but the reflections of the institutions, laws, usages and occupations of any particular people. Hence, it will not do to take a superficial view of this subject. It would be lost labour to build a house, even on paper, without examining the foundations. If the superstructure is to survive the fluctuations of time,—if it must withstand the shock of ages, it must be based on the indestructible rock of everlasting truth. The mighty power of combination, whether for good or for evil, is now so universally felt, that its legitimate application is becoming one of the most absorbing topics of the day. The necessity of organization too, for the attainment of great and comprehensive results is so obvious, that no one denies it. Yet, how few entertain just and adequate conceptions of its real dimensions, and manifold ramifications! Just as the earth is composed of atoms, so is society formed of units, and each unit, like each atom, has an independent organization, which bears marks of affinity with all the rest, and this affinity is alike traceable in the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal kingdoms. The first element in social organization is a legitimate form of government. The second is an abiding sense of our mutual dependence. The third is an intelligent and magnanimous resolve to bear one another's burdens, in simple obedience to the law of Christ.

To establish and preserve unanimity in the pursuit of any public object, there

must be some grand, and commanding motive common to all, and also some palpable indication of sympathy on the part of each individual amongst the organized. Where there is organization, there must be law, subordination, and gradation, all of which must be based upon intelligible and acknowledged principles. Wherever these elements co-exist in a high degree of perfection, rules must be able, vigorous, and impartial, and the mode of administration must be consistent with wholesome restraint on the one hand, and with rational liberty on the other. Self-manifestation being a law of God, and self-government being alike the result of that law and the end of our existence, no form of government can be permanently beneficial, that does not elicit and encourage individual and independent action. At the beginning man was placed under a perfect government—the government of God. The laws then given, being also perfect, are in their very nature unchangeable, inflexible, and absolute. But the Divine government itself is in no sense arbitrary or despotic. In its organic form it is a triune or threefold government. Before man was created, and ere it was determined that he should have dominion in this lower realm, a representative council was, so to speak, held in the audience chamber of the Eternal Three, who are, both in operation and essence, Eternally One. In the manifestation of this Oneness, as seen in the operation of the Deity, it is certain that on three several occasions, at least, in the history of our race, the same form of expression was used before action commenced. When man was to be ushered into existence, the fiat went forth;—"Let Us make man in our image." At the building of Babel, the ominous announcement was, "Let Us go down and confound their language." This form of address indicates not only a plurality of persons, but also the representative character, and the absolute accord of the Divine administration. That this mode of administration was to be adopted and perpetuated on earth, seems to be pointed out by the memorable conference on the holy mount, in the words, "this is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." On that occasion our Lord, as God over all, unquestionably represented the two dispensations, and in a subordinate capacity, Moses and Elias represented the first, and Peter, James, and John represented the second, or the New Testament period. This theory being admitted, it is clear that those organisations are the most perfect that are most in unison with the Divine procedure.

Now, the organisation that we seek to vindicate, is not only conspicuous in the Book of Grace, but is strikingly exemplified in the operations of nature. On what principle is the universe upheld and kept together? Is it not by the action of what is known as the law of gravitation? By what laws do the planets move in ceaseless harmony around the orb of day? Are they not all regulated and controlled by the exercise of two opposite forces—the centrifugal, and centripetal motions? These forces are as familiar to the mechanic as they are to the astronomer, and may therefore teach us by analogy that men are destined to assist, to control, to keep each other together, and in order, no doubt, for the achievement of sublime and glorious purposes. From what source our ancestors derived their ideas of three-fold government we need not inquire, but we do affirm that when, in this respect, we depart from their example, we wilfully turn our eyes from the rock whence we were hewn, and from the hole of the pit whence we were digged. We therefore resolutely maintain that this kind of organization is no erratic meteor, no wandering star, but that in its very nature it is a self-correcting, and a self-adjusting principle.

Having glanced at the fundamental principle of government, we hasten to apply it as it bears upon Sunday schools. It is, however, impossible to proceed with effect, without first noticing the obstructions in our path, some of which are even bound up with the facilities afforded in the prosecution of the work. To show what advancement has been made, and that greater advancement is possible, we may observe, that it is a well ascertained historical fact, that in this country there are in connection with the Established Church 14,500 consecrated places of worship, and that while the Dissenters have 21,000, with only 6,000 ministers, the Church of England has 20,000. In 1858, in England and Wales, the number of Sunday scholars belonging to the Church was 1,092,822; to Dissenters of all denominations, 1,295,575, leaving the Church in a minority of more than 200,000. According to the Report of the Royal Commissioners on Education, the proportion of scholars then being educated by the Church in her public week-day schools, was 76.2 per cent. of the whole population, and in her Sunday schools, only 45.8 per cent. The management of the week-day schools is vested in a committee consisting of the clergy and laity, but the Sunday schools are under the exclusive management and control of the clergy, not by compulsion, but wherever and whenever they may choose to assume the responsibility. The objection to this regulation is so serious, that it might seem impolitic to enlarge upon it, but as it emanated from the same source as the "Revised Code," we think it susceptible of modification and improvement. We give the Privy Council credit for good intentions, but we are bound to hold them responsible for the introduction of a principle into school management, so utterly at variance with the Constitution, both in Church and State. The objection does not arise from any disinclination on the part of the clergy generally to do what is best, but from the fact, that gratuitous labourers in Church Sunday schools are denied what is conceded to the paid teacher in the day school, viz., the right of appeal to the bishop of the diocese, or other arbitrators, in the event of a dispute between himself and the managers. Should this order of the Privy Council continue in force, it must impair, if not destroy, that mutual confidence which ought to exist between the clergy and their fellow-helpers. Happily, the majority of the clergy have no desire to possess this exclusive power, knowing that if they use it, it will certainly diminish their resources and increase their cares, without augmenting their usefulness.

Now, although unchecked power is alike dangerous in the hands of fallen man, in every station, we are not of those who would depose the clergyman from his proper position. We emphatically aver, that in his pastoral character he should always be at the head of the school, though not in a secular or judicial capacity. He may, and ought, to preside as moderator on most, if not on all occasions, but should never leave the Word of God to serve tables. In the mechanism of the school, he should be what the spring is to the watch. In all that concerns intellectual, social, moral, and religious training—in all that relates to the amenities of life, he should be the pivot upon which everything turns. Yet he should never become the slave of the institution, much less should he imagine that in the school nothing can, or ought to be done in his absence. Whilst he discourages everything approaching servility, and accords to every worker an independent position, he must set the example of trusting others, if he would himself be trusted. This mutual confidence is the very soul of organization, and is alike the foundation of good government, and of good management. Organization to be effective, must be of two kinds, external and internal.

The first is more or less applicable to all schools, and presents advantages such as those which the Church of England Sunday School Institute, and other kindred associations are now endeavouring to supply both locally and nationally. To accomplish all that is required, the provincial and the metropolitan associations should unite, so that all the advantages of legitimate combination may always be available, whether for information, for defence, or for mutual assistance. To secure these objects, all cities and large towns should have one or more periodicals especially devoted to topics of local and general interest. These publications should be open to communications bearing upon the defects, as well as upon the progress and advantages of Sunday schools. They should give notice of and also reports of lectures, addresses, and meetings for lessons, and for general purposes. But they should not become commercial companies, or publishing societies. Instead of confining themselves to stereotyped school books of their own production, they should encourage the literary efforts of private individuals, upon the principle of open and legitimate competition, with a view to propagate the best systems and methods of instruction far and wide. When constructed, or conducted upon any other principles, these outer organizations run the risk of retarding, instead of promoting progress. In connection with these external combinations, there should be sub-divisions of territory in each diocese under the supervision of rural deans, with the sanction of the bishop, a well organized staff of general visitors, consisting of resident gentlemen, whose business it should be to visit periodically all the schools in their several districts. They should not interfere with the internal arrangements of any school, but with the consent of the managers, they should be permitted to collect statistical, or other information, and to suggest improvements as opportunities might present themselves.

There should also be aggregate gatherings from time to time in cities and large towns throughout the country, for the discussion of Sunday school topics, which should be published as copiously as possible through the medium of their accredited organs. Without these appendages no organization can be either complete or popular, in the present artificial state of society.

We now come to the most difficult branch of our subject;—The internal organization of Sunday schools. The first step in the formation of a public institution is to inform, to enlist, and to hold responsible, as many persons as possible, without requiring any one at the outset to merge his own individuality when devising such plans as may be entitled to consideration. Those who take office should bear in mind that public offices exist for the benefit of society, rather than for the honour or the emolument of those who hold them, and if the people are fairly represented, and rightly led, the majority will always follow and support their leaders.

Although there is no essential difference between them, we must bear in mind that we have to do with both rural and urban populations. As a rule, the country people are quite as capable of being rightly taught, and usefully employed, as are the town's-people. In either case, the necessary occupations of the majority are compatible with Sunday school work, and may be so adjusted as to allow ample time for carrying it on. Though we cannot always choose our lot, we can understand that those occupations are the most favourable to works of piety and benevolence that are most free from disturbing causes. As now conducted, whether on the farm, in the mill, or in the warehouse, secular occupations are most formidable obstacles to Sunday school organization. We say this advisedly, for whilst we rejoice at the

partial cessation of labour to a late hour in towns, it must be admitted, that during business hours all the powers of body and mind are taxed to the uttermost, in some cases to get rich, and in others to remain honest, in coping with an unscrupulous competition. This prolonged and excessive application is required alike from the heads of firms, from junior partners, from the highest as well as from the lowest servants; from small tradesmen, in particular, and from shopkeepers and their assistants almost universally.

Nearly all are the slaves of their business, instead of being masters of it. Large as well as small orders must be executed on the spur of the moment, though all should stand still for days or for weeks to come. To catch the first train, to sail by the next tide, or to save a week's interest at the banker's, are now objects of superlative importance—for the accomplishment of which, the most convulsive efforts are demanded. If this system presses with more weight upon one class than another, it falls with double weight upon females in millinery and dress-making establishments. This wicked exaction—this foolish mode of conducting business, seriously weakens our forces, and diminishes the number of our recruits.

It is estimated that the Sunday school teachers of Great Britain number 300,000, and the scholars 3,000,000. Now, if the entire army could be organised, drilled, and incited to stand up as one man against the aggressions of capital—against the oppression of mammon,—what a mighty revolution might be effected! The taunt that "England is a nation of shopkeepers," is not yet verified, though it is said to be "the workshop of the world." But the worst feature of overtrading is, that the mining districts and the manufacturing towns are receptacles for new comers from all points of the compass. And until the legislature humanely interposed, they were used as so many hot-beds for transplanting and forcing a succession of once healthy plants which, but for that interposition, must have quickly perished. Yet, in defiance of law, and in violation of common sense, both boys and girls are still employed too early in life, whilst men are being laid aside as useless at the age of forty; and young men, at twenty-one, after a few years of unremunerated toil, are thrust upon the world to make room for others to be similarly dealt with. And their parents love to have it so, under the fond hope that some day their sons will distinguish themselves as men of business. The consequence is, that our manufacturing and mercantile populations are becoming mere birds of passage, and such they must remain, or otherwise become burdensome to others for an indefinite period. Not only is this intense application, and this anxious uncertainty unfavourable to Sunday school pursuits, but to ordinary and unfortified minds, they are positively overwhelming—to say nothing of the difficulty of applying "Christian morals to the endless and abrupt contingencies of a life of traffic," as now conducted. Hence, the difficulty of making a proper selection of Sunday school officials seems to be increasing rather than diminishing.

At the end of eighty years from the establishment of Sunday schools in England, the majority of teachers are juniors, who have no matured ideas of the duties of real life. How, then, in the absence of preparatory training, which is the rule, can we expect them to have adequate views of the responsibility and self-denial involved in the office of a Sunday school teacher? It is alike our reproach and our weakness, that nothing has been done, as it ought to have been done, to supply this lack of duly qualified teachers and conductors.

Yet, it would be easy to prove that great numbers of both men and women of superior worth have risen from the

Sunday school ranks, and the present want of employment for so long a period in the manufacturing districts has shewn the beneficial influence of Sunday schools upon thousands of the people. To shew that this influence is deepening, it may be stated that in 1842, the operatives of this city, and those of the surrounding townships rose against their employers. For a time everything was at the mercy of a violent mob. They entered the city in masses. There was no military sufficient to arrest this outbreak, when suddenly a low murmur was heard proceeding from the crowd; it became more general and distinct, and at length burst from the lips of hundreds in all parts of that vast assembly, the Divine command, "Thou shalt not steal." In a moment that daring mob was subdued and restrained. The voice of God was heard above the water-floods, and the madness of the people was stayed.

Those memorable words issued from the lips of many who in our Sunday schools had received their simple knowledge, and though it did not save them from excitement and evil influence, yet it kept them in the path of safety, and saved the town from being plundered, and its inhabitants from ruin. These facts prove that to some considerable extent, our Sunday school people are the salt of the earth, and therefore we are grieved to find that these institutions are sometimes contemned by men of education, wealth, and influence, as well as by men who at any cost are striving to substitute broken cisterns that can hold no water. Still it is too true, that whilst we have slumbered and slept, other appliances have become so prominent and popular, that they seem to be taking the form of established institutions, and are withal being stimulated to a ruinous excess. Some of these appliances are the more ensnaring, because they plead the necessity of relaxation, whilst they minister, not only to the senses, but to the cravings of a perverted intellect. No intelligent educationist can be opposed to healthful exercises, nor to innocent recreation, when duly regulated and controlled. But, unhappily, these things are now followed as professions or callings, by men who explore the very antipodes, whilst everything is being laid under contribution to divert or attract the attention of youth, as if to waste the seed-time of life in the pursuit of mere excitement. In every variety of form, the object seems to be to produce "sensational" emotions. With Sunday school people however, the card-table, the ball-room, the stage, and the race-course, are still prohibited attractions. Yet, they patronize others to an unlawful extent. Amongst these are the public gardens—the low public-houses with music saloons which are sometimes used as night asylums for fast young men, and look out domestic servants. It is humiliating to confess that both scholars, teachers, and their parents, frequent these places. Others as often resort to the excursion train, to the cricket-grounds, the parks, the hotels, and the concert halls. The most intellectual of these several grades of pleasure seekers, also patronize the scientific or literary institute, where theology is proscribed by the laws of the fraternity. Perhaps the worst sign of the times is, that even the pulpit, the platform, and the press, are perverted by some who ought to set a better example.

Strange and profane titles are given to lectures, to magazines and to books, which are extensively read by both teachers and scholars. The perversion of these instrumentalities, is fast superseding that simplicity of manners, which dignifies the most solid pursuits, and sweetens the purest enjoyments. Another characteristic of the age is, that many of our youth are superficial in their acquirements, as well as heady and high-minded. Their general demeanour is marked by squeamish sentimentality

and the most haughty self-confidence. Their faculties being unequally developed, the organs of veneration, and of self-esteem in the majority of heads present a striking contrast—the one being exquisitely small, and the other excessively large. Being deficient in one quality, and puffed up with another, they are captivated by every new thing, and dazzled by every new light. Ultimately they become enslaved by caprice, and join the ranks of those who bow to no authority higher than themselves, and acknowledge no religion but that which they call the religion of nature.

Such are the dangerous characteristics of modern society, and it is no libel to assert, that thousands of our Sunday school youth annually become a prey to the prevailing licentiousness. The aggregate average attendance of the scholars, is computed at five years, so that one-fifth, or 600,000 of the three millions leave the school every year, not as members of the Church in full communion, but for the most part as giddy youth on the inclined plane of life, without a break sufficiently strong to check their downward course. This is a tremendous loss to the Church and to society, and calls for great searching of heart on the part of those who are at the helm of affairs. To counteract existing evils, there should be in connection with every Church and schools, a select library, and a reading-room, under the direction of competent persons, whose business it should be to select and diffuse pure literature amongst the teachers and scholars, from whom weekly instalments should be received for the purchase of Bibles, prayer-books, hymn-books, and magazines, to be procured by a person specially appointed. There should also be some half-dozen select classes. The first should be for baptismal training—it should be called the Confirmation-class, and should be open to all in the parish of twelve years old and upwards. The second should be accessible to all young persons of moderate attainments, and of good character, who either have been, or intend to be confirmed, and should be called the Preparatory Teachers' Training Class. Its exercises should include critical and explanatory readings. The third should be for inquirers and communicants, and should be conducted by the clergyman, under any name he might see fit. The fourth should be for the study and practice of sacred music, both vocal and instrumental. The fifth should be an evening class, containing sections of both boys and girls, and should meet not less than twice weekly, for writing and other useful branches of learning. The sixth should be for mutual improvement, and recreation under the presidency of the minister, or his deputy. It should bear the honourable title of Rational Relaxation Society, and should consist of all parishioners of good behaviour and steady habits above a certain age, who might wish to join it.

This kind of organization is so consistent with the parochial system, so simple, and so practicable, that we feel astonished that it has not been more generally adopted.

One thing more is wanting, however, to enable the managers to give an intelligible account of every scholar, and of every teacher upon leaving the school. To do this, registers should be kept, in which their names and ages, their occupations, and residences, should be inserted, together with the length of time in attendance, their reasons for withdrawing, and the date of leaving. Every one leaving with credit, should receive a certificate, containing an exact copy of the particulars so recorded. When filled up, the recipient should personally wait upon the clergyman, the superintendent, and manager, for their signatures. This document should be of the most chaste and simple character, and in no case should it exceed the dimensions of an ordinary letter of introduction. By such means,

an introduction to good society beyond the boundaries of the school-house would be possible, the purest and earliest associations of life might be perpetuated, and our social ties greatly strengthened. Taxation for legalized idleness, and for the punishment of crime would be reduced, and in process of time a certain class of juvenile delinquents, called "City-Arabs," might disappear, and the stability of old England would, under God, be secured.

Before we enter upon the details of these institutions, we must notice another most important element in organization—the sustentation of schools. It is no digression, and certainly no libel, to say, that when building mills, and other large establishments, it would have been more rational and economical to have built and endowed both churches and schools at the same time. Wherever large numbers are brought together by capitalists, or by speculators without capital, the original inhabitants have a right to demand that the new settlers shall provide, at the outset, for the educational and pastoral wants of the numbers so brought together. If this were made a first condition of the social compact, by common consent, it would prevent much anxiety, and check the reckless adventures of men who have neither money nor character to lose. If we desire to avert the deterioration which is now at work, and to foster those principles which constitute a noble, a self-reliant, and manly character, some such condition as this must form the basis of our educational institutions for the operative classes. This kind of provision leaves ample scope for active benevolence, but admits of no evasion, and of no utopian experiments. It has been regarded as an obligation upon the owners of the soil, from time immemorial, and it is refreshing to state, that recently it has been acknowledged by mill-owners, in both Lancashire and Yorkshire. When stating these facts, we do not mean that everything should be done *for*, and nothing by, the people. No. We contend, that they should be fellow-helpers, to the extent of their means, as freemen and Englishmen having a local position amongst us. Sunday schools, as we have shewn, are the inheritance of the domestic circle, and are therefore particularly the institutions of the people. For eighty years, they have been mainly worked and sustained by the industrious classes though they have never asked for a fraction of public money for their support, and yet, all the while, they have been content to bear their full share of all other public burdens.

Christians of all denominations have their Sunday schools, and the Committee of Council on Education have recognised their existence, but not their claims. They have, it is true, given permission for day schools, to which they make grants, to be used as Sunday schools. This is the extent of their recognition, but strange to say, in the case of Church schools, they have clogged their generosity with conditions from which others are exempted. Wherever the old Sunday schools, built by public contributions, are now being used as day schools, under inspection, the Government officials have entered buildings, and compelled the managers to make alterations that have destroyed whatever adaptation those buildings ever possessed for their original purposes, though there was no mechanical or architectural difficulty that might not have been overcome by ordinary skill. Indeed, so sweeping has been the changes required by the Government, in both old and new buildings, that they might seem to have been designed to annihilate, rather than to perpetuate, the Sunday school system. In some of these buildings young people, from fourteen to twenty years of age, are doomed on Sundays to sit for one or two dreary hours, on backless and toppling benches, with their chins in their hands, and

their elbows on their knees, almost without any variation in the school exercises, or change of posture, except an occasional jostling with their companions on the adjoining benches. As a rule, these edifices have no private class-rooms, and only one ante-room, for special or general purposes, and in some cases this solitary apartment is even without a table or a chair. The main rooms are almost as destitute of suitable apparatus, and afford no decent provision for natural wants of any kind. Should any one be suddenly taken ill (it may be, at a distance from home, and in uncongenial weather), there is no place for retirement, until relief can be procured. To expect progress and efficiency, where this want of adaptation, and this lack of physical comforts prevail, in a civilised country, is to expect grapes from thorns, and figs from thistles. If, as time advances, Sunday schools are to keep pace with other agencies, the material building must be improved and enlarged. As institutions for domestic training, the boys and girls should assemble in the same rooms, and from infancy grow up together, as they do in the family, under a profound sense of those purities and obligations, which restrain and bind brothers and sisters together in after life.

To furnish all that is wanting, there should be as many private rooms in every school, as would enable every alternate, or intermediate class to retire from the large rooms during the time the lessons are being taught by the teachers separately. Such a revolution is neither beyond the patriotism, the skill, or the wealth of the country to effect. We therefore urge the plea, believing that Christian England will not long permit her noblest institutions to be excelled by the structures reared for trading purposes, nor yet by the magnificent buildings erected by poor-law guardians, who in this respect now seem to surpass us in providing for pauper children. Still, it must be admitted, that for some time past, the eyes of both clergy and laity have been open to existing deficiency, and that the majority have cleared themselves of the charge of supineness, whatever may have been their want of judgment in particular cases, as to the application of the great principle, of the adaptation of the means to the end.

The reports of the inspectors of public schools show that since the year 1839, members of the Church of England have contributed ten times as much money, and have built eleven times as many schools in England and Wales, as have all denominations of Dissenters together. Though we ought to be grateful, we have no room to boast of this apparent excess of liberality, whilst we are losing ground in our Sunday schools.

Yet, it cannot be denied, that as churchmen, we are educationists upon principle; and we can prove by our association with a host of good men, and by our sympathy with Raikes and his patron, and fellow helper, Dr. Stock, that we are strongly attached to both day and Sunday schools. Let us then, like our sires, continue to cherish these institutions, that they may go hand in hand to the latest generations. Should they ever be divorced, the day schools will be in danger of entire and perpetual secularization, and the Sunday school under priestly rule, may become as exclusive and servile as were the monasteries and nunneries of former days. Still, we believe in God, in the divinity of the Bible, and in the progressive nature of Christianity, and therefore we also believe that so long as the clergy and laity can work together for the instruction of the people, so long we shall be comparatively free from superstition on the one side, and from infidelity and lawlessness on the other.

But, we are not so irrational as to believe that these blessings can be perpetuated, nor so blind as to imagine

that these curses can be averted, without the application of those means, which, through grace, are designed to regenerate fallen humanity, and build it up anew.

How, then, can we so frame our conduct, so organize our forces, and so economize our resources, as to modify, or remove those hostile influences, which under the ægis of our national sanctuary, hinder the progress of Sunday school training? Simply by renouncing what is forbidden, and especially by abstaining from the abuse of lawful things, both in our secular employments, and in our social intercourse, and by adapting our training institutions to the necessities of the times. Statesmen, politicians, and men of the world, are straining every nerve to repress and prevent crime. They vie with Christians, in making the most ample provision for the offspring of the most dissolute parents. Why then should not the children of honest British workmen have equal, if not superior advantages—at least on one day out of seven? To a great extent the objects of the day schools are commercial and secular, and enter largely into that routine of toil which is allotted to man. But in the acquisition of knowledge, the aim of the Sunday school is to permeate the heart and mind with these simple truths—THE WORD of GOD ONLY; The GRACE OF CHRIST ONLY; The WORK of the SPIRIT ONLY. The inculcation of these fundamental verities being the end of all teaching therein, the building itself should in everything be a model of excellence. The construction and symmetry of the building, the internal conveniencies, the adaptation of the furniture and other requisites, should all harmonise with the high vocation of a nursery for God. The places where the earliest impressions are made, and the instrumentalities to be employed in training, should all be of the highest order.

(To be concluded in our next.)

[The above Lecture is from an old and experienced friend of Sunday Schools, but we must not be understood as adopting all his suggestions as our own.—EDS.]

Plans and Intelligence.

THOUGHTS ABOUT DISCIPLINE.

I AM doubtful if the word Disipline be not almost as uninviting as the word Medicine. Few like to hear of medicine unless they are ill. Few turn their thoughts to discipline unless suffering from the want of it, either in themselves or others. Even the often-heard cry amongst Sunday school teachers, "I wish I could keep my class in order; show me how to maintain discipline," is accompanied by the secret feeling that the process will be something like a bitter though wholesome draught; bitter perhaps in this respect, that we ourselves need to take, as well as to administer it.

As, however, few rules are without exceptions, so there are some teachers to whom the subject is familiar and welcome; and that, from two causes, on each of which I wish to say a few words.

First there is the love of order for order's sake. Perhaps, indeed, scarcely any one of my readers would plead guilty to a *want* of this feeling; yet many are (however unconsciously) destitute of it. Any superintendent, casting his eye round a school of ordinary six

will see instances; teachers who appear totally blind to the confusion and petty insubordination that reign in their classes. I have often been astonished to see the calm indifference with which such teachers regard the tricks and fun of a set of boys, or chatter and fidgetyness of girls. They seem to contemplate the scene much as they watch the freaks of gold-fish in a globe, or kittens on the hearth-rug—and as if their only duties were to teach at those welcome intervals when the children chose to listen. Little can be done to supply the sense of order thus grieviously wanting; it is a natural incapacity; and the desk, the wardrobe, or the daily pursuit would probably present the same features. Far different is it with those whom the methodless ones just spoken of are too ready to laugh at as precise, formal, or strict. There is, and always will be, a good-humoured feud between the two classes, each magnifying the defects of the other. Frequently the "untidy" and disorderly have an element of warm heartedness that compensates for their failings, whilst the methodical and orderly are apt to be hard and censorious; but let it be remembered that the unpleasing parts of each character are no result of the virtues; a love of order is not only compatible with kindness and patient forbearance, but is the divinely appointed companion of those graces. The God of love is the God of order, "Heaven's first law;" and they that love order and subordination are *so far*, right.

But there is another motive that deserves very different judgment —the LOVE OF CONTROL. Note the wide difference between the two following exclamations, though word for word alike—"I wish I could keep my class IN ORDER," and "*I* wish *I* could keep my class in order." Evidently the *means* and the *end* are altogether different. The desire in the first case is to see the habits of attention and obedience on the part of the children—in the second case to establish the supremacy of "myself the teacher." I need say but little on the vital difference between the two. The whole tenour of Scripture precept leads to the important lesson that where self triumphs, sin shares in the victory; and that the noblest achievement is to work for God, willing to be unnoticed and uncommended so long as His work is done.

This may seem a long introduction to my subject, but I much wish to place strongly before my readers the important truth that discipline is a means, not an end. For what is the END of Sunday school instruction? The religious education of the children; and the discipline and attention we aim at are only to be desired as assisting us to impart that education, and also as valuable acquisitions for the children themselves. It is quite possible (and herein I speak from personal observation) to aim at discipline so unceasingly and so sternly, as to pay far too high a price for it. If it be gained by

breaking instead of controlling the will in a child, love and trust are also destroyed, and the "spirit of bondage unto fear" trails the cowed heart in the very dust. Far better to win the prize by slow and patient (nay even checkered) toil, than grasp it by a reckless overbearing force, that robs it of all its real value. What we have to aim at is not the triumphing over our scholars, holding the reins firmly in our own hands, and driving them at our will and pleasure, for such a feeling is evidently inconsistent with the meekness, and poorness of spirit that Divine authority pronounced blessed. The purest pleasure is to feel that sincere love and Christian friendship have earned for us the affectionate and cheerful obedience of our young charge, and that thus we have gained for OUR MESSAGE the attention that it would be far too low an aim to seek fully for OURSELVES.

For, if we may use such an illustration, how does our Heavenly Father Himself delight to rule His children? Under a deep sense of guilt they humble themselves in the very dust—they must stoop to enter the door—but once in, they possess the "Spirit of adoption crying Abba, Father"—and more or less can say with their great Head and example, "I delight to do Thy will, O God." He is to them no hard task-master—His is no rod of iron to them. The only hard part of their life is the feeling that the old slavery has not yet been cast off—the only source of pain is that they should have any rebellious thoughts still left within. He, on his part knows that chastening is needed to perfect their deliverance, and to ensure their final and complete happiness; and so, not willingly does He afflict, but with strokes that He Himself feels; ("in all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them."—Isaiah lxiii. 9) thus leading them to Himself and Heaven's rest by means of the discipline of life.

Again, the essential difference between the two modes of action will become more and more apparent as life rolls on. Suppose a class so disciplined and controlled by a stern and rough will (women may thus err, as well as men) until fear produces thorough outward submission. A superficial eye may rest with pleasure on a class that is always quiet and orderly; but a reflecting mind looks beyond to-day or to-morrow. What will probably be the result when the "rod of the oppressor" is broken? What, when any circumstance removes the controlling eye and hand and will? Why almost inevitably this, that they who have bowed so low to human authority, instead of being taught to set up and to respect Divine Laws within the heart, will gladly cast off a yoke that has been imposed by a hand that is now powerless, and revenge themselves for a forced obedience by an uncontrollable self-indulgence. Such of my readers as have seen

much of life, will recall many a sad instance of this, both in families and schools.

Turn on the other hand to the wiser, happier course of ruling by love, and granting that the teacher has rightly used the precious influence thus gained, leading his class to know and to respect DIVINE law and authority, and to recognise God's will not man's as their rule of daily life, who will not at once see and acknowledge that here there is a fair promise of lasting benefit? The earthly tie may be broken, the eye, the hand, the voice of the beloved teacher may be missed and for ever, but the power of the truth remains. Not only does affection survive the separation, not only is it true that "he being dead yet speaketh," but soaring far above such earthly ties (sacred, and honoured, and useful though they be), the influence of true piety continues to train the heart and guide the life. It may well be a double pleasure to trace the spiritual path of an honoured friend, and walk in his steps, but the deeper reason for that path is that it is the one marked out by the Lord Himself.

This is the grand end and object of our efforts to enforce discipline. We wish not that we should rule our scholars, but that they should rule themselves. Self-control is the aim to set up: and what is self-control but another term for obedience? Obedience not rendered indeed to any authority without, but to a higher one within? They that have learnt to control themselves have begun to learn to submit in all things to the will of God; and when the latter lesson has been fully learned in heaven, the former will be merged and lost in it, for the spirits of just men made perfect know no will but one in entire conformity to God's will, and therefore have no sinful self to control.

The result of all this, I trust my readers will see, is that we should aim at teaching our children the Law of God as the Rule of Life. Of course, I mean the Law in its widest and fullest Gospel sense; the Law of a loving, reconciled Father, given us not as the condition of redemption, but as the result. Not "Do this and live," but "live and do this." What joy it is when we are privileged to see the young submitting themselves to such a Law, and learning to guide their life, both outward and inward, in conformity with the will, not of a mere Christian friend, but of an ever-present and heart-searching God! Nothing less than this should satisfy our wishes, nothing less should form the topic of our constant prayers. God has graciously strown the teacher's rough and toilsome path with many a pleasant flower; and few of us are insensible to the delight of grateful affection shown by our scholars, or even to the satisfaction of witnessing their progress in habits of attention, obedience, and self-

control; but let us ever look onward, let us remember that at the best our personal intercourse with these young people can be but brief, and that it may come even to a quick termination. Then let us strive to lead them to a Friend whom no time can alienate, and no distance separate; who never will or can forget; never prove unwilling or unable to help. And if His light and easy yoke be taken up and borne in youth, and His will be acknowledged as supreme, the happy possessors of such wisdom may be left by the parting teacher without a fear or doubt. "He that keepeth My commandments, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me, SHALL BE LOVED OF MY FATHER." Can the heart conceive, or the affections desire, a higher, nobler blessing than this?

I. G. F.

TEACHERS' SUNDAY MORNING PRAYER MEETINGS.

IN many Sunday schools it is the custom for the teachers to meet together for united prayer, in the class-room, or other convenient place, a few minutes before morning school. This is a most commendable practice. Its immediate effect is to awaken in some teachers, and to deepen in others, a sense of the real character of their work, and of the absolute need of God's blessing. Its ultimate effect must assuredly be, if we believe the Divine promises, to bring down the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon those who thus ask it.

But have not many of those who are accustomed to the practice often felt a certain *sameness* in the prayers offered on these occasions? It may not perhaps matter to highly spiritual minds, to whom all prayer is a pleasure; but to the great majority it certainly has a tendency, after a certain time, to mar the naturally beneficial influence of the meeting.

With the view of avoiding this monotony, and of giving point, precision, and reality to these morning devotions, the writer has adopted in his school the following plan:—The proceedings consist simply of an address and a prayer. The *address* is founded on one or more verses of Scripture, is made to bear upon some feature of the Sunday school work, and is about five or six minutes in length. The subjects are such as the aims and motives of the teacher, his spirit and conduct in and out of school, the topics of his instruction, his failings, his grounds of comfort, his hopes, his future reward; the speaker's remarks being of course suggested by, and expository of, the passage read.

The result of the adoption of this plan is, that the prayer each Sunday has its own special character, its topics being those of the address just given; and it is believed that the characteristics of

prayer,—humility, thankfulness, earnestness, dependence on God—have been much promoted by the adaptation in the manner described, of these little gatherings to the actual wants and feelings of the teachers. It should be added that both address and prayer are taken by the same person, who is always the superintendent or one of his elder fellow-helpers.

Those to whom this plan is new, may naturally suppose that the texts of Scripture which can be made to bear on the teacher's work, would be exhausted in a short time. The writer thought so when he began, but now that he has given nearly one hundred of these addresses, from different passages and has a considerable number of suitable subjects yet in reserve, while others are continually suggesting themselves, he perceives in this fact a remarkable illustration of the practically exhaustless fulness of Scripture. It is his custom, whenever possible, to choose his topic with reference to the seasons of the Church's year, or to any special event in the school or parish. Thus, last Easter Sunday, the text was, 1 Cor. xv. 14, and on Whit Sunday, Luke xxiv. 49, as illustrative of the presumption of teaching others without having the Spirit in our hearts. On the Sunday preceding our last summer treat, the address was founded on Zech. viii. 5; and on that following the departure of a valued teacher, Phil. iii. 12, as remarkably indicative of his character. These however, are of course the exceptional subjects. An idea of the more regular kind of addresses may be formed from the specimens subjoined to this article.

Should this communication lead to the adoption of the plan in other schools, the writer will be truly glad, being sure of the good effect which will result from addresses of the kind indicated, if judicious and practical, yet really devotional in character.

E. S.

I.

"Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." HEB. XII. 3.

There are many teachers who know what it is at the end of the Sunday's duties to be "wearied and faint" in their bodies; but how many more know what it is to be "wearied and faint in their minds." Probably there are some this morning who are going to their classes in this precise condition. Would we rebuke them? Possibly they deserve rebuke; for patient faith is the gift of God, and He "giveth to all liberally;" and we might say "Ye have not, because ye ask not,"

But we will rather give them words of sympathy and comfort. We know their "weariness" by experience. We know they are not "faint in their minds" without a cause. We have marked the ingratitude, the waywardness, the surly rebellious spirit, of certain boys in their classes. We have seen their afternoon lesson spoilt by the dogged temper of one scholar. They have tried all sorts of plans, from the most persuasive gentleness to the severest rebukes, but hitherto without

success. And now they are indeed "wearied and faint in their minds."

We turn to the "God of all comfort," and mark His words to these His downcast servants. "Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself." The description is unmistakable, even without reference to the preceding verse, where we are directed to "look unto Jesus." Whoever experienced "the contradiction of sinners" in the degree that He did? And whoever "endured" it with like meekness and patience?

Truly it is no small encouragement to a tried teacher to contemplate the sufferings of Christ, *i. e.*, not so much the agonies of Gethsemane and Calvary as the daily "contradictions" of His three years' ministry. When we think of the continual contact of His pure spirit with sin, the malignant envy of His enemies, the misconceptions of His friends, the slowness of heart and earthly motives manifested by His most faithful followers, the fall of Peter, the fate of Judas, not to speak of bodily privations and the sorrows of a tender heart for those in affliction,—we must feel that the Lord Jesus was indeed "in all points tempted like as we are." And the peculiar trial of an earnest teacher was His, for those whose contradiction He endured were the very people for whom He was suffering, and for whom He was to die.

We are to "consider Him." And what will this consideration teach us? *First*, it presents an *example* of endurance. Was the Saviour ever betrayed into a hasty word? Did He ever slacken His holy efforts for the good of men? Did He cast off Peter? Did He not pray for His very murderers? Did He not "love unto the end" His half-hearted disciples? Let us strive to copy the "meekness and gentleness of Christ." *Secondly*, it presents a *motive* for endurance. All He endured was *for our sakes*. Cannot this thought strengthen us to "run, and not be *weary*," to "walk, and not *faint*?"

II.

"Giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed."—2 Cor. vi. 3.

We need not hesitate to regard our work as teachers as a "ministry," and therefore to adopt for our guidance St. Paul's account in these words of his own conduct. While we should strictly repress the tendency sometimes seen, to put a Sunday school teacher's sphere of labour on a par with that of a clergyman, we may certainly apply to the former in a lower sense those passages of Scripture which refer primarily to the latter.

In so applying the words before us, we assume it to be a matter of concern to us "that our ministry be not blamed." We all care for our personal characters, but we are here also understood to care for the character of teachers as a body. And so it should be. In the eyes of that portion of the world which claims to monopolise all the intelligence and common sense that is abroad, a "Sunday School Teacher" is a compound of ignorance, prejudice, and inconsistency. And undoubtedly every young person who becomes one is from that day judged by a different standard from what is applied to all others, and this even by many good people who approve the work in the abstract. What reason, then, have we to see that our "ministry be not blamed" for any errors or inconsistencies of ours.

St. Paul had a similar, though indeed a greater, need for circumspection, and he tells us the principle he acted upon. "Giving no offence in anything." How searching, and yet how wide-ranging, is this canon of conduct! Not only avoiding evil, but the appearance of evil;

doing nothing that could be an "offence," whether a stumbling-block to weak consciences, or a cause for the cavilling of enemies; and this so vigilantly and sensitively, as to give no offence "*in anything*." How St. Paul acted out this great principle we all know; and to the possible idea that its adoption implies a shrinking from the avowal of those doctrines of the Cross and rules of life which ever are an "offence" to men, his life is a complete answer.

And let us not overlook one application of this principle, which is often forgotten, yet of deep importance. Let us strive to give "no offence in anything" to "these little ones" who are entrusted to us. Children often form their ideas of religion more from the lives than from the lessons of their teachers. Where a boy has no pious home, his teacher is to his mind the only embodiment of the "Christian," of whom he hears so much. And as the childish conscience is tender, so is the childish standard of religion very high, and this more in those little things which to us seem of slight importance than in the "higher Christian life." An irritated expression passing across the face, a wandering eye during the school prayers, a little hilarity at an inappropriate moment, an unfriendly word to a fellow teacher, will be marked and remembered by children even who give no evidence of piety themselves, and will mar the effect of many a carefully prepared and earnestly delivered lesson.

We do need to pray constantly,—

"Quick as the apple of an eye,
O God! my conscience make;
Awake my soul when sin is nigh,
And keep it still awake."

TEACHERS' PRAYER UNION.

THE Committee of the Institute again invite all fellow-labourers in the Lord's vineyard to unite with them, at the commencement of a New Year, in supplicating the Divine blessing on themselves and on all others engaged in spreading abroad the knowledge of the glorious Gospel, and endeavouring to win souls for Christ. That they may thus pray with one heart and one mind, the following subjects have been appointed for the Tuesday morning in each week:—

January 5.—*For the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all engaged in Sunday School work*, that He may take of the things of Christ and shew them unto us, and also may make intercession for us.

January 12.—*For all Sunday School Teachers*, that, having first given themselves unto the Lord, they may be eminently successful in winning souls for Christ.

January 19th.—*For the Church of England*, that it may be a true and living Church, and all its members be also members of Christ, and that it may be greatly enlarged, both at home and abroad.

January 26.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, that the Holy Spirit may be abundantly poured out upon those who have the direction of its affairs, as a Spirit of counsel and strength.

February 2.—*For all Sunday School Superintendents*, that they may be men of sterling piety and devoted zeal, endued with wisdom from on high to enable them to govern both teachers and scholars with Christian firmness.

February 9.—*For all Sunday Scholars*, that the truths learnt at school may be carried home to their hearts by the Holy Spirit, and made to bring forth fruit unto eternal life.

February 16.—*For all Clergymen*, that they may be illumined with true knowledge and understanding of God's Holy Word, and may set it forth both by their preaching and living.

February 23.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, that its publications may contain nothing but the pure truth of the Word of God, and that their usefulness may be very greatly extended.

March 1.—*For the Parents and Families of our Sunday Scholars*, that they too may be brought to the knowledge and love of Christ their Saviour, and aid in bringing their children to Him.

March 8.—*For those who have passed through our Sunday Schools*, that the seed sown in their hearts may be watered by the Holy Spirit, and made to take deep root, and to bring forth much fruit.

March 15.—*For all Missionaries*, that a door may be opened unto them in every land, and the hearts of the people prepared to receive the Gospel with faith and love.

March 22.—*For our Sovereign and the Royal Family*, that God may dispose their hearts to love and serve Him, and to rule their subjects in His faith and fear, to their good and His glory.

March 29.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, that its work may be owned and blessed of God, and that He will provide all needful supplies for carrying it on efficiently.

Sunday School Institute.

QUARTERLY RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

DURING the past quarter a large number of gatherings of teachers and friends of the Sunday school have been conducted or attended by the Committee of the Institute.

The Quarterly

DEVOTIONAL MEETING

for the members was held at the rooms of the Institute on the 6th of October, conducted by the Rev. E. AURIOL.

A meeting of

SUPERINTENDENTS

was held at the same place on the 8th of October, when Mr. SANDBY took the chair, and the conversation was directed to the consideration of the means by which the Institute could be rendered more useful to teachers, especially in the suburbs of the metropolis, and by which a corresponding interest in its operations could be maintained.

MEETINGS AND TRAINING LESSONS have been held at the following places during the past quarter:—

At *St. Jude's, Whitechapel*, Mr. SANDBY delivered an address to teachers on Sunday School Work, on Oct. 2nd.

At *All Saint's, Mile End*, Training Lessons were delivered as follows:

Oct. 28th by Mr. J. G. FLEET.

Nov. 4th by Mr. J. F. REID.

Nov. 11th and 25th by Mr. H. G. HEALD.

For the *South London Auxiliary*:—

Mr. J. F. REID gave a Training Lesson at St. Stephen's School Room,

Clapham Road, on November 15th, and Mr. F. NORTON another at the Bolton Street School Room, Camberberwell Road, on December 21st.

At the Annual Meeting of the *Shoreditch Association*, on November 3rd, Mr. H. G. HEALD gave an Address.

DEPUTATIONS

from the Institute have visited various places in Lancashire and Yorkshire. On October 19th Mr. NORTON and Mr. HEALD visited Bolton, where a Meeting was held, at which Addresses and Training Lessons were given. On succeeding days the Deputation went to St. Helen's, York, Hull, Preston, Manchester, and Bradford, where similar Meetings took place. At each place collections in aid of the Society were made, and wishes expressed for a repetition of the visit in the succeeding year. On October 15th, Mr. J. G. FLEET, as the representative of the Institute, attended the Church Congress at Manchester, where, under the Presidency of the Bishop of Oxford, the subject of Sunday Schools was brought before the assembled clergy.

THE ISLINGTON BRANCH

of the Church of England Young Men's Society having requested the Committee of the Institute to undertake the management of their Teachers' Monthly Training Class, arrangements have accordingly been entered into for this purpose, and the following programme has been arranged for that District by the Local Corresponding Committee:—

January 26th, Devotional Meeting. Addresses on "The Teacher's Motive and Aim," "The Teacher's Text Book," and the "Teacher's Strength."

February 23rd, Training Class, "The Gadarene Demoniac," Mark v. 1—17, Mr. E. STOCK.

March 29th, Conversational: "Illustrative Teaching," Mr. W. T. PATON.

April 26th, Training Class, "The Report of the Spies," Numbers xiii. 17—33, Mr. S. B. POWER.

May 31st, Conversational: "Discipline," Rev. G. ALLEN.

June 28th, Training Class, "The Israelites fed with Manna," (Tablet Lesson), Mr. J. F. REID.

All these Meetings to be held at the Parochial School Room, Little Cross Street, and to commence at eight o'clock, except the Infant Class, at half-past seven.

A meeting of

CLERGY, SUPERINTENDENTS, AND TEACHERS,

representing schools in Islington, was held at Barnsbury Hall, on the 15th of December, the Rev. D. Wilson, the Vicar, in the chair, to consider the measures to be taken in that locality to render the work of the Institute more efficient, and the help which schools in connection with the Society, may be fairly expected to render to it.

A similar meeting is in process of arrangement in the parish of St. Pancras, at which it is hoped the Vicar, the Rev. Canon CHAMPNEYS, will preside.

The

NEW YEAR'S SERVICE AND SPECIAL COMMUNION FOR TEACHERS

will be held at St. Dunstan's in the East, Fleet Street, on Tuesday evening, the 5th of January. The service will commence at 7 p.m. The Rev. EDWARD SPOONER, M.A., Vicar of Heston, will deliver the New Year's Address to Teachers.

THE NEW YEAR'S PUBLICATIONS

consist of—

"The Church Sunday Scholars' Almanack," price one penny, containing three Series of Lessons, Texts bearing upon the Collects, a Key to the Calendar, the Church Lessons, &c.

A New Year's Address to Sunday School Teachers, "The School in the Heart," by J. G. FLEET, Esq.

"Stand up for your Sundays," a reprint, by special request, of an Address to Sunday Scholars, by the late Rev. JAMES BOLTON; and,

"The Model Home," a New Year's

Address to the Parents of Sunday Scholars, by the Rev. J. F. SARJEANT.

A very considerable

REDUCTION IN THE PRICE OF PUBLICATIONS

issued by the Institute, has been made by the Committee, with the view of bringing them more generally within the reach of teachers, and at the same time of extending their circulation.

The following Books, &c., are now to be obtained at the prices stated, with the usual reduction to members and subscribing schools:—

Elementary Class Book, First Series, reduced to 8s. pr. 100.

Elementary Class Book, Lessons from the Proverbs, reduced to 8s. pr. 100.

Elementary Class Book, Second Series, from the Old Testament, 10s. pr. 100.

Elementary Class Book, Lessons from the Life of Christ, 10s. pr. 100.

Class Registers, 16mo., paper, 2d. each.
" " cloth 3d. "
" 12mo., paper 3d. "
" " cloth 4d. "
Conduct Card Registers, cut flush 5d.
" (present size) cloth 6d. "

The several Series of Notes of Lessons for Teachers' use, excepting those on the Jewish Captivity, reduced to 1s. each—those on the Jewish Captivity to 1s 4d.

The following additions have been made to

THE FUNDS

of the Society during the past Quarter:

DONATIONS.

T. D. Anderson, Esq.	1	0	0
G. W. Digby, Esq.	10	0	0
A. S.	1	0	0
Mrs. Silver	1	0	0

NEW ANNUAL SUBSCRIBERS.

Mr. Piggott	0	5	0
W. R. Carter, Esq.	0	10	6
Henry Jarvis, Esq.	0	10	6
M. O'Connor, Esq.	0	10	6
Rev. E. Spooner	1	1	0

NEW SUBSCRIBING SCHOOLS.

Heston	0	16	6
St. Mary's, Brighton	0	10	6
Abergavenny	0	16	6
Forgney	0	10	6
Nayland	0	10	6

It is with regret the Committee again draw attention to the small measure of support which the only Church Society for the improvement of Sunday schools, and for the training and assistance of teachers, continues to receive from the members of the Church of England.

Notices of Books.

WORK IN THE WORLD, OR A LIFE WORTH LIVING (London: Seeley 8vo., pp. 224), is a capital book, fully accomplishing the desire of the Authoress, which is to press upon the *educated young ladies* of the present day the necessity of employing their abilities for the good of those brought within the sphere of their influence.

RIVERS OF WATER IN A DRY PLACE; An account of the Introduction of Christianity into South Africa, and of Mr. Moffatt's Missionary Labours. Religious Tract Society. pp. 252.

We much regret that we have no room to introduce this book to our Readers at greater length. It is designed for the young, and we never met with so attractive an account of missionary work. The writer has certainly found the secret of putting "apples of gold into pictures of silver."

ANCIENT EGYPT: its Antiquities, Religion, and History, to the close of the Old Testament period: By the Rev. GEORGE TREVER, M.A., Canon of York. Religious Tract Society, p.p. 356.

This volume is an admirable compendium for the Bible Student, and well deserves admission into a teacher's library. We can cordially recommend it.

Notices to Correspondents.

Communications are thankfully acknowledged from C. E. C.; May; G. N. S.; Custer; E. S.; Dora; J. G. F.; L. H. S.; B. S.; J. B.; W. S.; E. S.; F. N.; S. B.; W. H.; and M. W.

The Editors would be thankful if all articles intended for insertion in the next Number were sent to them early in the Quarter, and *not later* than the end of February.

The Paper on "Catechetical Teaching," arrived too late for insertion in the present number.

Church of England

SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY

MAGAZINE.

1ST APRIL, 1864.

The Teacher in his Closet.

CHRIST, OUR EXAMPLE IN DUTY.

In the course of our Saviour's life on earth, as we read in our English Bible, He made use of the word "must" to express His obedience to that great plan of salvation which He had taken upon Himself to work out for lost mankind. We propose to select three of the most prominent instances of His usage of this word, and to seek from them some lessons especially bearing upon our work as Sunday school teachers. It is in the incidents and expressions which belong more particularly to our Lord's human nature that we find the clearest foot-prints for ourselves of the great Exemplar.

I.—"Wist ye not that I *must* be about my Father's business?" (Luke ii. 49). The scene which groups itself around these words is well known to all of us; the child Jesus in the Temple in the midst of the doctors, listening attentively to them, and putting questions to them about the law; the discovery of Him by His parents, who had sought Him sorrowing, and their inquiry into the motives of

His conduct, to which the words quoted above form the answer. Our Lord, when He became very man, placed Himself under the necessity of working out man's salvation, as God had appointed, and in this duty has left us a great lesson for ourselves. There are many men in this world who know not wherefore they are here at all, who live on day after day in the vain expectation that to-morrow will show them to what end they were born, and what is the object of their life. These are they who stand idle in the market-place, and say, "No man hath hired us." To such the words of the child Jesus speak; they tell us all what our duty is—we were placed in this world to do our "Father's business." With this thought we must choose our profession in life—we must make a start while we are young. If in the midst of our daily occupations we are doing God's work, all will be well with us.

II.—"I *must* work the works of Him that sent me while it is day." (John ix. 4). This was said in the midst of our Saviour's work on earth. The nation amongst whom He had preached had rejected Him; the Jews had "taken up stones to cast at Him," but even in this hour of persecution He did not turn away from the blind man whom He saw "as He passed by," but anointed his eyes with the clay, and sent him to be healed in the pool of Siloam. The Saviour's work was now going on; it was still the day, the night had not yet come "when no man can work," and so He was carrying out, urging forward, His Father's business, and He *must* work the works of Him that sent Him. And we must do likewise. We, who have resolved to live for God, must not be content with the mere resolution, but must begin our work now, and hold fast to it through trials and persecutions. "Now" is the only time which God has given us; "the night cometh when no man can work." Thus we have spoken of the beginning and continuation of the Christian's life, as taught us by our Lord's example, and we now come to the completion and the perfecting of the struggle ere the victory is gained.

III.—"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it *must* be?" (Matt. xxvi. 53, 54).

The day was fading away; the night was at hand; the struggle was not yet over. The Saviour was in the hands of the traitor Judas. It must be so. It was in our Lord's power to have called from heaven twelve legions of angels to His aid—one word from Him, and a celestial brightness would have flashed in dazzling splendour through the dark shades of those olives of Gethsemane, the clouds of night might have fled away before the glory which

surrounded the countless hosts of heaven; but it was not so to be, that was not the work which He had come into the world to do. It *must* not be. The "Father's business" had been taken in hand and had been carried out; it must not be marred, made vain at the last, but must be completed, perfected. The Scriptures must be fulfilled. Here is surely another lesson for ourselves. We must not make a good start, and perhaps carry on our work for a little while carefully and actively, and then let it drop; we must, as far as we are able, bring it to some state of perfection and completeness.

Fellow-teachers, fellow-workers in Christ's vineyard, shepherds of the flock of Jesus, labourers in the service of your King and Saviour, need I apply these words to our work of Sunday school teaching? Let us not forget that we have chosen to do our "Father's business," and that, therefore, we must carry out our work with love and zeal. Nor must we give it up at times when it may appear too hard for us, but strive, with God's help, to overcome our difficulties, and, as much as possible, to complete our work. We know that it is a great and difficult work, and it is the knowledge of its greatness which should make us feel that it is worth doing at all, and "what is worth doing is worth doing well." If we had no strength but our own to depend on, no words but our own to guide us, we might indeed despair; but, with Christ as our Example, our Helper, and our Redeemer, and in humble trust and prayerful dependence on the power of God's holy Spirit, may we not, each one of us, say, "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work?"

Cheltenham. W. H. A.

"HE SHALL GATHER THE LAMBS WITH HIS ARM."

It was late one Saturday afternoon when a Sunday school teacher made her last visit at some cottages in one of our large towns. A casual remark of a poor woman, however, led her to arrest her homeward steps,—"Have you seen that poor girl, ma'am?"

On inquiry I was directed to a loft which was only occasionally occupied, and then only by the poorest and most destitute. It was approached by a sort of ladder-stair, and although I had often been there before, I was not prepared for the scene of discomfort and wretchedness which met my eye on entering. The room looked both bare and dirty; a little table under the window, one chair, and a trestle-bed, constituted its only furniture. Here lay the poor little sufferer, of whom I was in search. A fearful inward malady was

consuming her strength, and had evidently brought her to the borders of the grave. There she lay, looking a child of but seven or eight, though really eleven, so reduced had she become. No mother's hand was there to smooth her dying pillow, or moisten her parched lips. Standing on the rug before the scanty fire, her father, an honest-looking waterman, watched her heavy breathing, with helpless despair written on every feature.

I recognised the poor child as a scholar, who had been admitted to our Sunday school, not many weeks before, but who had not been there since. "That was the very day she was took ill, ma'am," said the father, "and though I do my best, you know a man isn't much of a hand in a sick-room. She's been a good girl to me since her poor mother died; and she's just as sensible as a woman. She's got a fancy that if she were to go into the Union to be nursed, that she would be much better done by, than I can do for her; and so, if you would be so good as to stop with her a bit, I'll take down the order that I've got, and have her fetched there to-night."

After ministering a little to her comfort and need, I entered into conversation with her on that which is the first thought of a Sunday school teacher on such an occasion: and how my heart bounded to find that this dear child was "one of the little ones which believe on Jesus," whom He was bearing in the arms of His love and carrying in His bosom.

"I know I am not going to live long. I feel it, but I am not afraid to die." "Why are you not afraid?" "Because He loves me." "How do you know He loves you?" Never can I forget the emphasis with which she replied, "Because He *died* for me."

> "Oh, what has Jesus done for me!
> When shall I see Thee face to face,
> My wondrous, blessed Saviour?"

On my asking her where she learned all this, she replied, "Oh! I was taught it long ago in B——— Church Sunday school" (a little village a few miles off). Though her frame was racked with pain, and her countenance frequently convulsed by the intensity of her sufferings, yet her eye lit up, and a smile beamed upon me while we spoke together of Him, "Whom having not seen" she loved, and of the "hope laid up for her in heaven." "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them even unto babes."

A neighbour's child had placed upon the mantlepiece a nosegay of simple flowers. The fragrance of stocks and wall-flowers filled the room. As my eye rested on them, Hannah T. said eagerly "*You* take them, ma'am, I should so like you to have them." That

I should not disappoint her I selected one, and long did I treasure the gift of the dying girl, when the eyes of the giver were gazing upon the Lord,

"Where everlasting spring abides,
And never withering flowers."

I taught her a little prayer, repeated one or two verses of Ps. xxiii., and commended her to the care and guidance of Him who had trodden the dark valley before her; as I left her, she said, "Good bye, I am going home—home with Jesus."

Within an hour after my departure, Hannah T. was removed to the Union-hospital; and the following week, on the Sunday morning, she was released for ever from sin and suffering, and entered upon the "rest that remaineth." The Chaplain of the Union took a particular interest in her during the short time she was under his charge, and said that he never saw any one so prepared for death. Even in the hours of unconsciousness she was still observed repeating her hymns, and the little prayer so lately learned. "Suffer little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Her anxiety for the conversion of her father, had been very touching: but he seemed more full of pride in what she had been to him, than influenced by her piety and example. He used to boast that she had been several voyages with him, fetching coals from Newcastle, and had three times steered their brig through London Bridge; and now that small hand lay still in death, and He who had held the helm of her frail bark, had brought her in peace unto her "desired haven."

Dear fellow-teachers, let us learn from this incident the importance of doing at once what our hand findeth to do. Dr. Sibbes has well said, "Opportunity is God's angel. Time is short, but opportunity is shorter. Let us *catch at it* whenever given us." Had I yielded to inclination, and deferred going to see Hannah T——— until Monday, I should have lost my only opportunity of witnessing her faith and simple trust, of cheering and comforting one of her last hours, and of having my own heart strengthened for future Sunday school work by this fulfilment of the Divine promise, "My Word shall not return unto me void."

Again, this narrative contains much encouragement to the faithful Sunday school teacher. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that." No, *you* do not know; but the "Lord of the harvest" does. Sometimes, for your encouragement, He permits you to see the blessing with which His Spirit has crowned your labours in His vineyard, but it is not always so. Yet think not, because you do not perceive the fruit, that, there-

fore, it will not one day appear; "Though it tarry wait for it, because it will surely come" in God's good time; and though you may not yourself, in this world, be privileged to do so, yet it may be given to stranger-eyes, as in this case, to behold the blossoming of the tiny seeds of truth, which the loving teacher had sown in faith and prayer months before in that young heart.

And does not this also prove the oneness of the teacher's work wherever exercised? Standing beside that sick-bed, the teacher of the city Sunday school felt drawn by the magnetic links of love to the teacher in the village Sunday school, who had thus faithfully won this soul to be a gem in the Saviour's diadem; and the day is not far distant when He whom we love, and whom we humbly, yet earnestly, strive to serve, will come to call us to Himself, and when both she that soweth, and she that reapeth, "shall rejoice *together*."

Delta.

"ORA PRO ME!"

"Ora pro me!" the words are breathed
At many a sculptured shrine,
Where tapers gleam and flowers are wreathed,
And gold and jewels shine.
The suppliant lifts imploring hands,
Where the cold image silent stands;
The living supplicates the dead.
Woe! for the words thus vainly said,
"Ora pro me!"

"Ora pro me!" the mournful prayer
Is carved on many a tomb;
Too late! too late! we may not dare
Oh, grave, to pierce thy gloom!
They who have passed Death's solemn shore
May ask for human aid no more:
We can but answer with a sigh
Th' unspoken words, the voiceless cry,
"Ora pro me!"

Oh, heavy-laden soul! with all
Thy fears, thy wants, thy grief,
The living God doth bid thee call
On Him for sure relief.
Now, in the time of toil and strife,
Now, in the fleeting hours of life,
His mercy and His blessing crave,
Nor cry to those who cannot save,
"Ora pro me!"

Portchester. **J. F.**

"FORGETFUL HEARERS."

THERE never was a time when the Gospel of the kingdom was preached in faithfulness and love from so many of the pulpits of our land. Pure evangelical truth is proclaimed with no uncertain sound: "milk for babes, and strong meat for them that are of full age."

Yet in these days of sermon-hearing, and sermon-appreciation, what are we the better for the weekly discourses to which we listen? Are we making the full use of our privileges—are we benefiting as we ought by them? Assuredly not. He who knows his own heart best, will acknowledge, that Satan, our spiritual adversary, is nowhere so active and alert, as in the house of God, and *on our way from thence.* He will permit us to listen attentively, to weigh, reflect, admire; for He knows well that *there,* with many of the congregation the matter will end. And this subject particularly applies to Sunday school teachers, on Sunday morning. There is so little time between the close of the church service and the commencement of afternoon school, that we are more likely to be led away by this temptation and device of Satan than the other members of the congregation, especially if we are at all enthusiasts in our work; for then, probably, our thoughts revert to our class, and our Sunday school lessons as soon as we are out of church. Alas! how often on this account, have we reason to exclaim with the spouse in the Canticles, "They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard have I not kept."

St. Paul knew this danger when he wrote to the Hebrew Church, "Let us take more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip;" or as the margin appropriately expresses it, "run out, as leaking vessels." Heb. ii. 2. And to the Corinthian Church he implies that their stability in the faith depended upon their "keeping in memory that which he had preached to them," 1 Cor. xv. 2.

We shall always suffer in our own souls if we allow even Christian activity to hinder the remembrance of, and feeding upon, God's truth. This it is which keeps our spiritual stature so stunted and meagre. It is only digested food which nourishes our bodies; and our souls require the same sustenance.

> "Why, therefore, should we do ourselves the wrong,
> And others, that we are not always strong?"

Our usefulness as teachers depends very much upon our spiritual strength; and, if we fail to feed in our heart upon that portion of meat which is specially given us by God's appointed ministers, we must decline in health and vigour.

"Not that which we hear is our own, but that which we carry away;" and every Sunday school teacher should make it a religious duty to secure at least five or ten minutes on his arrival at home, to recall in retirement the words which have so lately sounded in his ears. This will be still better effected if the heads of the sermon are noted down, so as to facilitate a more detailed recollection at the close of the day. Above all, let him spend a few moments in prayer upon its subject-matter, that it may thus be imprinted ineffaceably upon his heart and memory.

If we would make it also our practice to keep the sermon before us in our Sunday school lesson, and always ask one or two questions upon it in the course of our teaching, we should impress it still more effectually upon our own souls, and also awaken an interest in those of the children. The very thought that their teacher will require of them some knowledge of the sermon will stimulate their attention, and form a life-habit, the full benefit of which may never be known in this world. We may refer to the experience of Johnson, the devoted missionary of Regent's Town, whose history is an emphatic illustration of our subject. Only a text was thus remembered, but that text struck the key-note of his life, which will sound on beyond the corridors of time unto the far-off shores of eternity.

The Duke of Wellington was accustomed to ascribe most of his great victories to his strategic maxim, "Always strengthen the guard at the weak point." Let us acknowledge one of our weak points, and act accordingly. Let us watch with a holy jealousy over our hearts, and determine, in God's strength, to say with David, "Thy (preached) word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee."

The Rev. J. Gritton, in his speech last May at the Annual Meeting of the Church Missionary Society, mentioned a simple incident which bears upon this point. "In the village of Tinnevelly, I preached to the people on one occasion a very elementary sermon on the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the body of the believer. When I went out afterwards to get a little cool air in the evening, I heard voices, and on going quietly to the place I found seven or eight men belonging to the congregation assembled together, and by the light of the moon, and the aid of their reference Bibles, they were carrying out my idea, taking up the subject at the point at which I had left it, and going into the deeper mysteries of the text."

Is not there a lesson here to most of the congregations of Christian England? Oh, what zeal for the Lord, what inward growth, what love for Christ and His cause would they then display! What earnest "soul-gatherers" would our great army of Sunday school teachers then become, "being not forgetful hearers, but doers of the word, and blessed in their deed!"

Delta.

DAYBREAK.

Some six weeks ago, I was anxious to fulfil an appointment in the Midland Counties, which required me to start by the early mail, and to leave home before the dawn of day. It was intensely dark as I sallied forth, and the cold air seemed to have a peculiar rawness in it. This led me to remember that it has been observed that the night is always darkest and coldest just before daybreak,—for then the sun has been longest and farthest from the earth. The street lamps seemed to have no power to disperse the gloom; but as my eyes turned towards the east, I observed a single streak of pale light amid the surrounding darkness,—the welcome harbinger of the approaching day. For a long time afterwards, as the train hurried on, I sought to distinguish the objects I passed in vain: gradually, however, their outlines were discernible, and after a while I began to see a greyish tint taking the place of the deeper hues which had hitherto been spread around. Still I watched the grim, indistinct forms which I hurriedly passed, and found that imperceptibly they were becoming sharper in outline, separating themselves from each other, and assuming easily recognisable shapes. At length, a brighter light was spread over the sky,—clouds could now be distinguished from the dark mass; and towards the east, warm gleams of sunlight, yet shrouded, were struggling to make themselves apparent. When they burst forth upon the landscape, it was beautiful to behold,—for the pale clear morning light streamed softly down upon the hamlets and homesteads, the fields and lanes, and gave a charm even to the ordinary objects around, which was enhanced perhaps by the gloom that had so long enveloped them. Gradually all things seemed to awaken to new life and vigour under the influence of the sun's rays, as they became more powerful and genial; and I hailed the brightness and beauty of the perfect day, which I had watched in its progress from its first dawn, as a cause of thankfulness to that good and gracious God, who thus constantly exhibits His love and might

in the succession of our seasons for labour and repose,—our mornings with their returning light,—our evenings with their soothing shadows for our weary eyes. Still, as I pursued my journey, all was not uninterrupted sunshine; the blue sky was often clouded—sometimes so lightly as only to afford pleasing contrasts of light and shade—at others so completely that the whole horizon seemed to be overcast with gloom, and the sun to be quite obscured, until again the bright light burst through all obstacles, and I reached my destination with its rays glittering upon my path.

The occasion of my journey was a sad one. I had been called hastily by dear friends to mourn with them over an only son, called unexpectedly to his rest, and to follow his remains to their last earthly resting place. Thus my thoughts were divided between the things seen which are temporal, and the things unseen which are eternal. I saw in the outward world the figures of the spiritual world, and felt that the Maker of the one intended, perhaps, to teach us His dealings with the world of spirits, by analogy with His works in nature. The intense darkness and the chill in the air, before the dawn, seemed to speak of that "darkness which covered the earth and gross darkness the people" of old, and which still obscures the minds of those who have not yet seen the light of Him who lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. How dark is the natural understanding in divine things!—how cold the natural heart in all that relates to the dawn of the Sun of Righteousness! Yet with the first gleam of heavenly grace, the capacity is given to see something of the ways of God, and the purposes of our being; afterwards, as that light extends, we see yet more clearly ("men as trees walking") only outlines and forms massed together, but still enough to satisfy us of the *reality* of eternal things. Then as that Divine light increases, we comprehend the plan of salvation more distinctly, things obscure gather form and purpose, things before unseen appear with life and beauty, and a harmony is shed over the common scenes of our daily life which changes them from the dull uninteresting monotony they wore before, to things of beauty which are "a joy for ever." The Sun of Righteousness rises with healing on His wings, and sheds light and life upon our souls; in His light we see light; and if we abide in it we go onwards, and upwards, shining in the path of the just unto the perfect day. True, indeed, clouds may dim for a season the brightness of our sky—troubles, sorrows, temptations, losses, may cause all to seem dull awhile; our tears may fall in the hour of bitter bereavement or of declension in our faith and love, as the rain descends from the darkened sky in heavy torrents: but the clouds will pass away in due time, the sunlight of Divine favour will be restored, the meridian brightness will, in God's good

providence, be reached, and we shall know the blessedness and the glory of that abode of which God is Himself the sun, where no tears are shed, and where there is light, even "at evening time," for Christ is Himself the light in the midst of it.

And yet another analogy seemed to be suggested to me. I was compelled to leave my class for a single Sunday, in consequence of this journey, and my thoughts were naturally drawn towards them. Is not our teaching, like shedding the light of God's truth upon the darkness in the hearts of our scholars? If so, ought we to expect the day to break suddenly and completely, all at once, and to find the clear knowledge of Divine truth, and the warm hearty love of it, taking directly the place where all was cold and dark before? Will it not be a very gradual process, as was the dawn that day? A gleam of light first—indistinct apprehension of God's works next—then a clearer knowledge of their nature and purpose, until the warm sun of heavenly love, mingled with the light of Divine Truth awakens in the heart the love of that which is pure and lovely. I took comfort at the thought,—for I had often grieved at apparent hardness of heart, want of power (as I fancied) to comprehend the simplest truths of God, and indifference to that love of Christ our Saviour by which I hoped to draw their hearts to Him. Then I remembered the waywardness of some among them, giving promise of earnestness at one time, but destroying it by carelessness or wilfulness at others; and I thought of the clouds which had for awhile obscured the sun-beams that morning, and yet how in the end the clouds had been dispersed, and the light had triumphed. May it not be so with our scholars, if we will be as constant and persevering in our work as is the sun which "rejoiceth as a giant to run his course?"

M. S.

Troubles.

"Sometimes I compare the troubles which we have to undergo in the course of the year to a great bundle of fagots, far too large for us to lift. But God does not require us to carry the whole at once: He mercifully unties the bundle, and gives us first one stick, which we are to carry to-day, and then another which we are to carry to-morrow, and so on. This we might easily manage, if we would only take the burden appointed for us each day; but we choose to increase our troubles by carrying yesterday's stick over again to-day, and adding to-morrow's burden to our load, before we are required to bear it." *Rev. John Newton.*

EARLY FLOWERS.

See the pale primrose! peeping from its bed,
While round it yet its nurselike leaves are spread.
Thou early blooming, and most welcome flower,
Thy head is reared 'mid storm and icy shower;
With tint so delicate, so very fair,
Thou look'st too frail the wintry blast to bear.

And thou, oh, pearly snowdrop! thou dost bring
With thee the budding hopes of coming spring;
An emblem bright of purity thou art,
When pristine innocence dwelt in the heart.
Yet, on thy chaste form gazing, it appears
Thou soon would'st melt away in icy tears,
For bending thy sweet head so meekly low,
Thou seem'st as weeping for thy parent snow.

And hail to thee, loved modest violet fair!
Thou shedd'st thy odour on the clear cool air;
A type of worth and modesty most sweet,
Thou lov'st to live and blossom in retreat,
Content with thine own fragrance thou dost shun,
Amid thy leaves, the glory of the sun.

And the bright crocus, with its golden cup,
Through spear-like leaves rejoicingly comes up;
A chalice filled with balmy treasures sweet,
The wandering bees its early beauties greet.
Oh, fair flowers! springing from the earth so cold,
Ye teach us sweetly, as your leaves unfold,
Lessons of love in tender mercy given,
To raise our hearts in grateful praise to Heaven.

Portchester. *Frances Ann.*

Something Done.

"I see in this world two heaps, human happiness and human misery. If I can but take the smallest bit from one heap and add to the other, I carry a point. If a child has dropped a half-penny, and by giving it another I can wipe away its tears, I feel I have done something. I should be glad indeed to do greater things, but I will not neglect this."

Rev. John Newton.

CONFORMITY TO THE WORLD.

THE Scriptures so distinctly forbid and so clearly represent the sin and danger of conformity to the world, that to all who would live godly in Christ Jesus, must this subject be one of deep interest, and earnest investigation.

The command to *come out*, and to be *separate*, and not to *touch* the unclean thing, is binding upon every one, who, having "confessed the faith of Christ crucified, and promised to fight manfully under His banner as a faithful soldier and servant," would keep the sacred pledge, and render willing, obedient service.

The Scriptural command is "Be not *conformed* to *this world*, but be ye *transformed* by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God;" and the Church Catechism (with which every one is familiar from early childhood) teaches, that one part of the solemn promise at baptism is "to renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world;" nevertheless, it is to be feared that to many professing Christians, *separation from the world* conveys a most unmeaning sound, and if at times the baptismal vow start forth from the recesses of memory, or is heard in the still small voice of conscience, it is moulded and softened till conscience is lulled, its voice stifled, and memory clogged with the fleeting, perishable, unholy pleasures of earth. But there are also some professors of religion, who, partially impressed with the importance of attending to their eternal interests, confess that life should not all be spent in the vain pursuit of transitory passing things, yet are afraid of all *extremes* (as they are pleased to term that separation from the world which the Word of God enjoins) and seek with what they call *moderation* to follow both religion and pleasure,—in other words aim at the hopeless task of serving two masters, notwithstanding that they ever and anon hear the Saviour saying "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," and St. John, the beloved disciple of the Lord, re-iterating and echoing as it were his Master's words, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." It is not the idea of *partial*, but rather of *entire separation* from the world, which is conveyed to the servants of God in these words: the Lord would have His children to be "a *peculiar* people," to shew forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light.

Many and great are the constraining *motives* which should prompt the believer to renounce the world, and to live contrary to

its maxims, precepts, and pleasures; a Christian is solemnly *pledged* to do this,—*enlisted* into Christ's holy service by baptism, he is *bound* to *fight against* the *world* as one of the bitterest enemies, the deadliest foes of the Master whom he serves, as well as of his own soul. It is true that much self-denial is required, that many difficulties must be met and overcome, many a hot fire may be endured, many a hard battle fought, many a severe wound borne with Christian patience and resignation; but the *soldier* never *expects* his life to be an *easy* one, never anticipates that it is to be spent in pleasures and amusements. St. Paul when writing to Timothy told him to "endure *hardness* as a good *soldier* of Jesus Christ." If then he who promised to be upon the Lord's side, when the enemy appears fears the struggle, shrinks from the contest, postpones the battle, and meanwhile parleys with the dangerous foe, seeking to have friendship with the world ("which is enmity with God"), and yet to retain a place in the army of the Lord, the attempt must prove vain, and the inconsistent professor, forgetful of his allegiance to Christ, must be by Him regarded as a *deserter*, for assuredly worldly conformity is nothing less than *desertion* from the ranks of the "Great Captain of our salvation."

But the Christian's *walk in life* as well as his *profession* is opposed to the world; he is described in the Bible as a *pilgrim* going forth to "seek some better country, that is a heavenly;" St. Peter directly addressing the "peculiar people" says, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as *strangers* and *pilgrims*, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." Would a soldier, returning to his home, worn out with incessant warfare, weary with many a long march, bearing the traces of many a hard fought battle, and having yet many miles of enemy's country to traverse ere he could reach his own loved land, linger by the way to admire the scenery which surrounded him, or to gather flowers which, though looking bright and attractive in that foreign soil, could never flourish in his own to which he was hastening? Oh! no; nor would even the companions with whom he had for years been associated, (though they might be pleasant and even dear to him), detain him on his way; so must the Christian "lay aside every weight and the sin which doth most easily beset him," and "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

The believer is, also, called to *imitate the example* of his Lord and Master,—no part of whose character is more striking than His *deadness* to the *world;* trace Him through His whole life, from the hour of His birth in the manger, to the hour of His last agony on Calvary, and in every step appear sorrow, trial, sore temptation, poverty, and humiliation; and should not then the disciples of the Lord Jesus prove the sincerity of their profession by being

likewise *cross-bearers?* That cross is the distinguishing mark of Christ's soldiers; He Himself carried it constantly while on earth; and if His people shrink from imitating Him in this respect, there must be some division of heart which causes the unwillingness, some secret cleaving to earthly things beyond what is lawful.

But many people will argue that it is difficult to draw a line between lawful and unlawful recreations, between innocent and worldly amusements, and ask how far they may mingle with the world, without treading on forbidden ground? God has not, it is true, given in His Word any express directions as to every *mode* of amusement, it would be unreasonable to expect this; but if the Bible be made the study of the Christian, God's Word the test by which every *doubtful* amusement or pleasure is tried, these difficulties will daily diminish, and decision in following the steps of his blessed Master, will deliver him from innumerable perplexities, which beset and often overcome the *wavering* professor. If the believer "is not his own, but bought with a price," if he is to "redeem the time, because the days are evil," to "be transformed by the renewing of his mind," to "put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," to "be renewed in the spirit of his mind, and to put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;" then, surely, there need be no precise rules laid down concerning particular pleasures in which he may or may not take part. Let the Christian but allow conscience to speak truthfully, and seek fearlessly to obey its dictates, and he will soon discover which are lawful recreations, which forbidden, or which doubtful; and, altogether turning his back upon forbidden pleasures, he will forego the doubtful ones, which are at all events an *approach* to *forbidden ground*, exposing the soldier of Christ to great and unnecessary danger. The Christian feels that it is better to avoid all such occupations of time, especially when he reflects that by joining in doubtful amusements he may become a stumbling block in a brother's way, and have to give solemn account at the great day of judgment of the talent of *influence* committed to his care which he *cannot hide*, but *must use* while on earth, *for* or *against his God*. "He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad." Reproach, too, is often called down upon the religion of Christ by the inconsistencies of His followers, who thus lose the privilege of winning glory for their Master, and conquests for their King. One thing is certain, that as men grow in grace and vital godliness, they will rather avoid than follow after such things as *doubtful amusements*. Their time will be better occupied, and the constant, close communion of the soul with Jesus, will give a distaste for the pleasures of this world in which (were Jesus visibly pre-

sent) He would be seen to take no part, and their tastes will move in a higher, even in a heavenly element.

Surely then, those who have specially devoted themselves to the Lord's work, who are seeking to win souls for their Saviour, to gather in many out of the "highways" to the "marriage supper of the Lamb," should fight nobly, in the *foremost ranks* of the Lord's army, against this bitter foe, even the world, giving it no vantage ground, but rather making it retreat step by step from that of which it holds possession; and the Lord Himself having provided tried armour and weapons for His soldiers, the enemy may be encountered, and the battle fought with unwearied zeal and unflinching courage; for though the warriors be weak, the Captain of their salvation who is with them is strong, and He has promised that they "shall be more than conquerors" if with watchfulness and prayer, they seek to "fight the good fight of faith."

But, perhaps, while thus urging upon professors of religion entire separation from the world, a word of *caution* may not be out of place, lest some who are anxious to be devoted to God should stumble through any mistaken inferences. While the Word of God distinctly commands a *hearty renunciation* of the world, and forbids the disciple of the Lord to be conformed to it, this does not imply that he should be neglectful of the active duties of life; the Christian is rather to evidence that practical religion fits a man "for that station of life unto which it pleases God to call him," because it gives him a contented mind, and teaches him in all his duties, small as well as great, to have a single eye to the glory of his Lord and Master, charging him, whatsoever his hand findeth to do, to do it heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men; to be "not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;" and looking to Him whether in prosperity or adversity, in temptation or trial, in joy or in sorrow, in fear or perplexity, the Christian will find that stronger is He that is with him, than he that is against him, and that the Lord can and will "keep" all who put their trust in Him, "unspotted from the world."

May.

FRIENDSHIPS.

Few circumstances, especially in our early years, so materially influence the formation of our character, or the course of our future lives, as the friendships we form. We all know how insensibly the home affections mould our thoughts and feelings,—how our tastes and wishes become assimilated to those of the loved ones who are ever with us; and, to a great extent, the same effect is produced by those whom we admit into the circle of our friends. It has been said that "every friend is to the other a sun and a sunflower also—he attracts and follows;" and thus, while the true friend is a magnet drawing us towards that which is good, and directing us to the onward and upward path of light and truth, the false one "is like the ivy which decays and ruins the wall it embraces."

That which Cicero said of friendship, that "it improves happiness and abates misery by the doubling of our joy and the dividing of our grief," is especially true, and only really so, of the *Christian* friend. Of such an one only can it be said that he "loveth at all times,"—the same in adversity as in prosperity; in sickness ready to console you, as well as to share your joy in health; in trouble to weep with you, as well as in prosperity to partake of your gladness; in times of false reproach to defend you, as in the hour of triumph to offer his congratulations; to reprove you for your errors, as well as to commend your good actions; and one who you feel will remember you in long years of absence with that warmth and tenderness, mingled with sadness, which has been compared to the effects of the mellow rays of the departing sun. Such friendships are not evanescent, but are like the shadows of the evening which strengthen with the setting sun of life; for, as Robert Hall has said, "the friendship of high and sanctified spirits loses nothing by death but its alloy; failings disappear; and the virtues of those whose faces we shall behold no more, appear greater and more sacred, when beheld through the shades of the sepulchre." The grave does not destroy the tie, but only parts us from such loved ones for awhile:—

> "All are friends in heaven—all faithful friends—
> And many friendships, in the days of time
> Begun, are lasting here, and growing still."
>
> Pollok.

Yet, just in proportion to the power which such social ties exercise over us, should be our care in the selection of our intimate

companions. Bishop Butler has said, that "there is such a natural principle of attraction in man towards man, that having trod the same tract of land, having breathed the same climate, becomes the occasion of contracting acquaintance;" but we shall do well to pause and consider before we allow such accidental circumstances to incline us to form associations which may affect, for good or evil, our whole future course. The poet Young has given us some good advice on this point,—

> "First on thy friend deliberate with thyself;
> Pause, ponder, sift, not eager in the choice,
> Nor jealous of the chosen; fixing, fix;—
> Judge before friendship, then confide till death."

As years roll on we are able to trace the influence of our friendships upon our individual lives, and, as we look back, to observe in the past the effects of long communication with those who have thus helped to form our own personal character. Such a retrospect has been recently forced upon me by the loss of one who, for more than twenty years, was my intimate associate, and who, being older than myself, and endowed with a highly educated mind, as well as strict Christian principles, was able to guide and counsel me in the beginning of my own course. Our tastes were assimilated on most points, yet whenever we differed, each openly and frankly stated his reasons for objecting to the opinions or the feelings expressed by the other. In the main we felt it to be a mutual pleasure and advantage to discuss together (in that confidence of friendship and agreement of spirit which combine to change the converse of friends into thinking aloud), sometimes the solemn subjects of Divine truth and spiritual life, at others the various branches of human knowledge, and the events of every-day life. Our happy intercourse was abruptly terminated; for, in God's mysterious Providence, my friend was seized suddenly with fatal illness, losing all consciousness, so that no word of recognition could be uttered ere he entered on his rest. Such a friend is not to be replaced; but his influence upon my past life has not been lost, and will not be in the future; and, when we meet again in the world of light, we shall find that there are bonds of sympathy still unbroken, by which our spirits hereafter will be able to renew their communion in eternity.

Although, perhaps, only one such friendship will take a prominent place in the case of each one of us, yet there are few who are not blessed with many social advantages and opportunities of obtaining the sympathy of those among whom they are placed. Companionship in occupation frequently leads to the kindling of this feeling, for in pursuing a common purpose, and in following the same

employment, we find an opening for a more intimate acquaintance. This is especially true of Christian work; there we feel that our fellow-labourers are brethren in the Lord; He who is dearest to us is no less precious to them; the work is His in which we are both engaged; His blessing must prosper it; His smile reward us; we know that His people are all the children, by adoption through Him, of the same loving Father; that our home is prepared by Him in the same celestial mansions, and that hereafter we shall all meet in His presence to sing the same song of praise. Such companions are likely to be true friends—not enticing us into sin, or leading us into folly or idleness, but helping us to increase in the knowledge of that which is pure and true, strengthening us to pursue the narrow way which leadeth unto life, and cheering us in the difficulties which may beset us on the road. "As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

In the Sunday school especially, such associations are often formed. I can recall several such in my own experience, for I still enjoy the friendship of many who have been separated from me in the work for years, by absence from London or other circumstances, and I know of many similar instances which have come under my observation. Teachers who have at first met as strangers, engaged in the same work of making known the truth of God to the young ones committed to their charge, have found a sympathy of thought and feeling, an agreement in their tastes and pursuits, which have attracted them to each other; and being heirs of the same hope, sharers of the teaching of the same Spirit, and believers in, and followers of, the same Lord, they have been able to realize personally His prayer on behalf of His people that "they all may be one." Numerous are the instances in which these Sunday school associations have saved both scholars and teachers from the snare of evil company; for friends all desire to have, and it is a cause of thankfulness when God places us among those who will be true and faithful, not false and deceitful ones. Such companions will support us in our resolutions to resist temptation to evil, and will make our lives happier and more useful, by inciting us to continued perseverance in every good word and work.

Thus, among the many reflex blessings to ourselves, which we may derive by our work as Sunday school teachers, not one of the least is the opportunity it affords us of becoming acquainted with those who may worthily be admitted into the inner circle of our friends, with whom we may walk in fellowship, and take sweet counsel, mutually strengthening each other in fulfilling our resolve to dedicate ourselves to the service of the Lord.

W. S.

The Teacher in his Study.

SACRED SITES DESCRIBED BY MODERN TRAVELLERS.

II. The Mount of Olives.

The Mount of Olives consists of a range of four mountains, with summits of unequal altitudes. The highest rises from the Garden of Gethsemane, and is the one fixed on as the place of our Lord's ascension.

About half-way up is a ruined monastery, built, according to the monks, over the spot where Jesus sat down and wept over the city, and uttered that prediction which has since been so fearfully verified. The view from the summit embraces, perhaps, more interesting objects than any other in the world—the Valley of Jehoshaphat, the Garden of Gethsemane, the City of Jerusalem, the Plains of Jericho, the Valley of the Jordan, and the Dead Sea.

Walter Keating Kelly, 1844.

A few words respecting the Mount of Olives may not be misplaced. This hill will seem to many of our readers, perhaps, the most interesting locality in the world. The marks and boundaries of Jerusalem itself have been so altered in the course of ages, that it would be difficult to fix upon any spot which may be supposed to present even nearly the same appearance which it did in the time of Christ. But respecting the Mount of Olives, there is no doubt or question. In all the changes of time and of possessors, it has continued to retain its name, and to exhibit the perennial green of the tree from which that name was derived. There is much reason to conclude that, even in its surface, it is now little different to what it was in that day when king David went up its ascent "weeping and bare-foot," or that later day when the Son of Man was wont to resort thither—when from thence he wept over the doomed city, whose "goodly buildings" he had viewed—and when at last He ascended thence to resume his place "at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

Dr. Kitto.

The sides of the mountain are still sprinkled with olive trees, though not thickly as was probably the case of old; a few other trees are occasionally seen. This mountain, so celebrated both in

the Old and New Testament, is called by the Arabs Jebel-el Tûr and lies on the east of Jerusalem, from which it is separated only by the narrow Valley of Jehoshaphat. It is usually said to have three summits, the middle and apparently the highest of which directly opposite the city, has been assumed by a very early tradition as the place of our Lord's ascension. Towards the south it sinks down into a lower range, over against the well of Nehemiah, called now by the Franks, the Mount of Offence, in allusion to the idolatrous worship established by Solomon "in the hill that is before (*i.e*, eastward of) Jerusalem" (1 Kings ii. 7, 8). Across this path leads the usual road to Bethany.

The brow of the main ascent, distant about twenty-five minutes from the Damascus gate, presents the interesting northern prospect of the city which has been so celebrated by travellers. It is indeed fine.

Dr. Robinson.

There are three particulars of the deepest interest which take possession of the mind when contemplating the Mount of Olives. The first is, that it was the scene of David's sorrow and humiliation when he fled before the face of Absalom. (2 Sam. xv.; xvi.) But a greater and more glorious one than David, and one more humbled and abased than he, has sanctified the Mount of Olives with his frequent habitual presence. It was Jesus of Nazareth, God manifest in the flesh. Yes, God incarnate trod those very paths, which my sinful feet so often pressed; and ascended those slopes, over which I many times essayed to follow Him in spirit. If He chose the garden of Gethsemane and its lonely seclusion, as the scene of His last spiritual agony before His betrayal, it was to the Mount of Olives that He resorted, from the din and stir of the city, to pour out His soul in secret communion with His Father—to meditate on the marvels and mysteries of redemption, and to brace up His human energies for an achievement, the glory of which should be seen throughout the world, and felt eternally in the universe. If it was on Calvary that He determined by dying to abolish death, and to bring immortality to light by the gospel, it was from Mount Olivet that He ascended up on high, leading captivity captive.

There is a day coming,—is it far distant?—a day in which there shall be heard a cry, which sin shall not check, nor prejudice confound, nor unbelief stifle—a cry that shall ring throughout Jerusalem, and on the top of every mountain, and in the depths of every valley of Judea; thousands shall utter it, thousands shall rejoice in it, millions shall wither at it,—and the cry will be, "Blessed be He

that cometh in the name of the Lord;" and Mount Olivet will be the scene, not of the Saviour's humiliation, but of a final and glorious victory, for his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east.

The view from the western slopes of the Mount of Olives is, as a picture only, extremely magnificent; colour, form, composition, all are of the finest order; but the mind, however touched by such things as these in scenes with which no hallowing recollection is associated, soon wanders from the mere picture, and gives itself up to reflectiveness.

Rev. G. Fisk.

On the east, the city is immediately enclosed by a long ridge, itself with four distinct summits. This ridge is that known both in the Old and New Testament as the Mount of Olives, or the Olive Garden.

From every roof of the city the long ridge of Olives forms a familiar feature, so near, so immediately overhanging the town that it almost seems within it.

The olive and olive yards, from which it derived its name, must in earlier times have clothed it far more completely than at present. Now it is only in the deeper and more secluded slope, leading up to the northernmost summit, that these venerable trees spread into anything like a forest. And in those times, as we have seen from the name of Bethany, (*i.e.*, house of dates) and from the allusion after the captivity, and in the Gospel History, myrtle groves, pines, and palm trees, all of which have now disappeared, must have made it a constant resort for pleasure and seclusion. Two gigantic cedars, probably amongst the very few in Palestine, stood near its summit, under which were four shops, where pigeons were sold for purification. The olive and fig alone now remain; the olive still in more or less abundance. It was by "the ascent of the Olives," 2 Sam. xv. 30, that David went up on his flight from Jerusalem to Mahanaim, at the news of Absalom's revolt. It was at the "top of the mount" that he had his last view of the rebellious city, 2 Sam. xv. 32. It was a little way past the top that he encountered Ziba and the asses, laden with provisions. It was as he descended the rough road on the other side that Shemei went along on the side of the mountain "over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust," 2 Sam. xvi. 13.

This mournful procession, affecting as it is, and linked with every stage of the ascent and descent, stands alone in the earlier history of the Mount of Olives. Its lasting glory belongs not to the Old dispensation, but to the New. Nothing perhaps brings before us

more strikingly the contrast of Jewish and Christian feeling, the abrupt and inharmonious termination of the Jewish dispensation—if we exclude the culminating point of the Gospel history—than to contrast the blank which Olivet presents to the Jewish pilgrims of the middle ages, only dignified by the sacrifice of the "red heifer," and the vision, too great for words, which it offers to the Christian traveller of all times as the most detailed, and the most authentic abiding place of Jesus Christ. It is useless to seek for traces of His presence in the streets of the since ten times captured city. It is impossible not to find them in the free space of the Mount of Olives.

Rev. Arthur Stanley. 1852.

THE HERODIAN FAMILY.

I.

In all Sunday schools the life of Christ, as given by the four Evangelists, naturally forms a very large proportion of the lessons which are taught every Sunday; anything therefore bearing on that subject, will no doubt interest all earnest teachers. The Herods played a very prominent part in the time of our Saviour; it was a Herod who tried to kill Jesus in his cradle; it was a Herod who mocked Him on the day of His death; it was a Herod who put His fore-runner to death; it was a Herod who also put His disciple James to death; it was a Herod too, whom St. Paul "almost persuaded to be a Christian," yet, notwithstanding all that they did, there is an uncertainty in most people's minds, as to what relationship existed between the different Herods, and also as to the actions of each, which it is the object of the present article to trace in a clear, brief manner.

Let us begin then by thinking of the past history of the Jews, that we may have some idea of the state of Judea, when Herod the Great became its king.

After the return of the Jews from the seventy years' captivity, they had rebuilt their temple and capital, under the protection and patronage of the Persian monarchs Cyrus, Darius Hystaspes, and Artaxerxes; order was restored to the land, and laws—human and divine—enforced by Ezra and Nehemiah; the Jews might then be looking forward to a bright future, but on Artaxerxes Ochus succeeding his father, 360 B.C., being a monster of cruelty, he barbarously murdered the Jews. Not quite two hundred years after (170 B.C.) Antiochus Epiphanes proved a terrible scourge to them

—taking their capital, pillaging their temple, and destroying or selling 80,000 people. Their misery during these years was much increased by the quarrels in their own families—high priest overreaching and murdering high priest, and brothers frequently killing their own brothers, from ambition or revenge. Mattathias the priest, in B.C. 167, determined to deliver his country from foreign oppression, and from domestic tumult; being assisted in his object by his brave, patriotic sons, the Maccabees. (1 Mac. ii. 1—5, 64—67. Josephus, Ant., xii., vi., 2—4.)

B.C. 106. Alexander Janneus, the son of Hyrcanus, succeeded his brother Aristobulus in the government of Judea, and raised the kingdom to a high pitch of grandeur; but unfortunately for this unhappy people, only about forty years after this grandeur (B.C. 63), Pompey took Jerusalem on the Sabbath, on the plea of settling the civil war between Hyrcanus and Aristobulus. Pompey entered the temple, penetrating even to the Holy of Holies, which the High Priest himself only entered once a year, and great was his astonishment on finding it empty,—no bust, figure, nor idol symbolised the Hebrews' JEHOVAH: on his departure he took Aristobulus and his family prisoners to Rome, leaving the government of Judea to Hyrcanus. (Ant. xiv. iv. 45.)

B.C. 54. Crassus perfidiously carried off (according to Prideaux) two millions of money belonging to the temple, and two years after Cassius attacked the poor remains of Aristobulus' party, and carried off 30,000 people, and 44 B.C. he imposed a tribute of 700 talents. Forty years before Christ, Herod was made king by Antony, at a time when the Romans, having mastered nearly the whole known world, were weakening their empire by the civil war then raging —Cassius and Brutus being opposed by Mark Antony and Octavius Cæsar.

HEROD THE GREAT was the son of Antipater, an Idumean of noble birth, who had become a convert to Judaism. Antipater's father had been governor of Idumea, under Alexander Janneus, and he, from selfish motives, now strongly espoused the side of Hyrcanus against his brother Aristobulus. Antipater, presuming on the incapacity of Hyrcanus, and relying on the support of the Romans, appointed his eldest son Phasael to the government of Judea, and his younger son Herod to that of Galilee, he being twenty-five years of age at the time. Herod soon shewed his firmness, prudence, and valour, by clearing his territory of hordes of banditti, which gained for him the esteem of Sextus, the Governor of Syria.

The Jews, being jealous of the Idumean family, instigated Hyrcanus to cite Herod to appear before the Sanhedrim, or Senate of

Seventy, which was composed of seventy-one priests, elders, or Levites, the High Priest being president; it was the great court of judicature for all capital offences; inflicting the punishment of scourging, or death either by the sword, strangling, burning, or stoning: this power was no doubt much curtailed by Herod, and regained under the Roman Governors. Both Jesus and His disciples were brought before this court. Comp. John xi. 47 with Matt. xxvii. 1. Acts v. 22, 27; xxiii. 1.

Herod obeyed the summons, but came with his choicest troops, which so terrified his judges that they durst say nothing against him; Hyrcanus seeing, however, that they wished to condemn Herod, deferred the sentence till next day, and in the night advised him to escape; he accordingly retired to Sextus, who gave him the government of Cœle, or Hollow-Syria.

B.C. 42. The fate of the world had just been decided at Philippi, when a hundred principal Jews accused both Herod and Phasael, before Antony at Daphne near Antioch. Hyrcanus, being consulted, spoke strongly in favour of the two Idumeans, as he had promised his grand-child, Mariamne, in marriage to Herod, and as Herod was ever ready to worship the rising sun, he with rich presents, tendered his allegiance to Mark Antony, which resulted in their both returning to Judea, with the title of Tetrarch.

The brothers did not return, however, to a peaceful kingdom; for Antigonus, the last remaining branch of the Asmonean race, called to his assistance the Parthians, who were over-running Syria, and with their help, gained possession of Jerusalem; and also captured by treachery, Hyrcanus, whose ears were cut off to incapacitate him for the office of High Priest, and Phasael, who beat out his own brains in prison; while his crafty brother Herod escaped to Rome, where he prospered beyond his most ambitious hopes.

B.C. 40. His design had been to set up the claims of Aristobulus, the brother of his beautiful betrothed Mariamne, who united the claims of both Hyrcanus and Aristobulus:* but Antony and Octavius conferred the crown on Herod himself, whose modest scruples did not prevent his accepting it. Herod had left Judea a fugitive; only three months after, he returned as its king, and with the assistance of Roman soldiers he overcame Antigonus after two years' fighting, and took his own capital, Jerusalem, after six months

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* Hyrcanus — Aristobulus

Alexandra — Alexander

Mariamne — Aristobulus

siege; Antigonus being sent to Rome, where, at the request of Herod, he was put to death by the insulting stroke of the common lictor.

B.C. 37. Herod the Great, having overcome his rivals and enemies, and being in quiet possession of a kingdom, which he could hardly have expected, might now look forward to some years of quiet enjoyment; but here his character grows rapidly worse, for instead of exercising his power, and his great talents entirely for the good of his new country and subjects, he often used them merely to gratify his cruelty, lust, and revenge. Like Nero, Herod is an awful warning against giving way to besetting sins.

Let us take advantage of this short calm, to view the landscape and country, of which Herod now finds himself king;—let us picture to ourselves the land which our Saviour trod, and the views which He saw.

It was a compact little kingdom, pleasantly situated in the temperate regions, having the whole of one side open to the sea, with the advantage of 200 miles of sea coast for fishing and commerce, for health and profit. The kingdom consisted of Galilee, Samaria, and Judea, and beyond Jordan, Trachonitis, Ituria, and Perea (although Herod did not possess all these at once). On the north, are the mountains of Lebanon with its cedars, and Hermon, where the picturesque river Jordan takes its rise, flowing through the beautiful lake of Gennesaret,* so famed for its lovely scenery, then, dividing the country almost in a straight line, it reaches the desolate shores of that awful and lasting monument of God's punishment of sin, the Dead Sea. The landscape is pleasantly diversified by a chain of irregular hills running from Mount Carmel on the sea coast, down to the "hill country of Judea." Multitudes of little brooks and streams, and numerous little trickling rivulets taking their sources from this chain, run across the country to join the sweet waters of the Jordan. This land of sunny cliffs, where the vine and the olive grow spontaneously, and of shady secluded valleys where refreshing shelter and cooling streams may always be found,—the land where the graceful, elegant palm tree adorns the landscape,—this country might well be called "a land flowing with milk and honey" (Ex. iii. 8); "a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines, fig trees and pomegranates; a land of oil-olive, and honey" (Deut. viii. 7, 8). Who can help feeling for the poor stiff-necked Jew? now a wanderer in other lands, a sojourner in colder climes, instead of "eating every man of his own vine, and

* Matt. iv. 18; Luke v. 1; John xxi. 1; vi. 1.

every one of his fig-tree, and drinking every one the waters of his own cistern" (2 Kings xviii. 31)—an outcast from his native land, which with cultivation and irrigation, may yet be made (when God removes His curse from it) "a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive, and honey" (2 Kings xviii. 32).

B.C. 34. Thinking to gain over the Asmonean party, Herod made his brother-in-law, Aristobulus, High Priest. He was a lovely youth of seventeen, of such exquisite beauty and grace, that when he appeared in his splendid pontifical robes, he gained the affection of all the people; on which the suspicious Herod ordered his young companions to drown him, while bathing at Jericho. His mother sent an account of this murder to Cleopatra, who then had Antony in her silken, yet heavy chains of sin; but Herod boldly going to Egypt, was able to secure himself; and after his return, he on suspicion murdered his uncle Joseph, whom he had left in command.

B.C. 31. The naval battle of Actium was fought between Mark Antony and Octavius, afterwards Augustus Cæsar, which left Augustus the Emperor of the world; and Herod, after putting old Hyrcanus to death, at the age of 80, hastened to meet the youthful conqueror at Rhodes, who confirmed him in his kingdom, but there was little enjoyment from it in store for Herod now.

B.C. 29. After twice ordering his beautiful beloved Mariamne to be killed in case of his own death, she was at last put to death on a false charge,* and after the irrevocable deed, Herod was seized with such remorse and anguish that he became temporarily deranged, and afterwards tried to divert his mind with gorgeous pageants, splendid banquets, and costly buildings. He tried to add to the natural beauty of his country, by adorning it with the works of man; besides greatly improving the architecture of Jerusalem, he rebuilt Samaria (it having been destroyed by Hyrcanus) on a scale of great magnificence and strength, and named it Sebaste (*the August*): he also built a beautiful commercial town on the coast, with palaces, theatres, esplanades, and harbours, which he called *Cæsarea*, both out of compliment to the Roman Emperor: at the same time, he built a magnificent palatial citadel for himself seven miles from Jerusalem, which he named Herodion, after himself.

B.C. 19. Herod was gradually Romanizing his kingdom, religion,

* Her mother, although knowing her innocence, reviled her on her way to execution, to curry favour with Herod, but very soon followed her daughter, and is almost the only victim who cannot draw our sympathies, as she was the vilest of her sex, being so full of vices as seemingly to have no room for any virtues.

and subjects, sending his two sons by Mariamne to Rome for their education, and was thus losing any affection which his people might have had for their king, while some joined in conspiracies to rid them of a man whom they hated, despised, and abhorred; knowing that he was no favourite with his people, he commenced the rebuilding of their temple in his usual style of splendour, but at the same time presided at, and contributed to the Olympic games.

A new fabric of more regular and stately architecture, with glittering white marble, and pinnacles of gold, by degrees crowned the hill of Moriah:—where Abraham was called to offer up his son Isaac (Gen. xxii. 2); where David made his peace with God on Araunah's threshing floor (2 Sam. xxiv. 25); and where Solomon reared the noble house to God's honour and glory (2 Chron. iii. 1). It was no wonder that the disciples with pride shewed Jesus "the buildings of the Temple," and said with pardonable national vanity —"Master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings are here" (Mark xiii. 1), and as the building was continued after Herod's death, it was no exaggeration when the Jews said, "*Forty and six years* was this Temple in building" (John ii. 20). How imposing, and calmly grand must it have appeared to travellers from Jericho, as after passing Bethany, and Bethphage, they saw from the Mount of Olives, the east or "Beautiful Gate" of the Temple, which was the first to be lit up by the early morning's clear sunbeams, shining resplendently in the bright rising sun.

"The way of transgressors is hard," said the wisest of men (Prov. xiii. 15): if Herod's sins were great, he was fearfully punished even in this world, for on the return of his two sons from Rome, his eldest son, Antipater, so poisoned his mind against them, that they were both strangled in the flower and vigour of early manhood, B.C. 6. In the midst of all his crimes and murders, Herod still retained his love for his younger brother Pheroras, and (oasis in his desert life of crime) visited him with fraternal tenderness on his death-bed.*

B.C. 5. Herod, troubled in mind, troubled in his family, and troubled by his subjects, was now seized with a terrible illness, from the pain of which he could obtain no relief; let us leave him on his sick bed to his conscience for a short time, while we turn to a more pleasing subject.

* It is only due to Herod to relate another redeeming act in his favour. Before this a famine had been brought on by a long drought, when Herod not only supported 50,000 persons, but also sent corn into Syria, to sow the ground, for the following harvest.

It was four years before the common period called A.D.* The Roman world under Augustus Cæsar was at peace on all sides—the four gates of the Temple of Janus being shut. The Jews had been led by Isaiah and Daniel to look forward to the Messiah; and their expectation at this time was high, that a Conquering King would appear, and raise their nation even higher than the excellence it attained in Solomon's days. How different was it from their expectations, when the Saviour was born of humble parents, and cradled in a manger! The shepherds "keeping watch over their flocks by night," were told by the angels of the birth of "the Good Shepherd:" the wise men in the east were guided by a star to the "Star of Jacob" (Num. xxiv. 17), and found Him in the lowly stable, instead of in the kingly palace.

Herod knowing his own unpopularity, and the expectation of the people, and hearing the Magi asking, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" was naturally "troubled, and all Jerusalem with him," as they were afraid of more wars and bloodshed: he therefore craftily hid his real feelings in order to get "the child Jesus" into his power, and "when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born." Matt. ii. 4.

What could these chief priests and scribes tell Herod of the Messiah, from the prophecies which they had? 1. *The Birth*,—"Unto us *a child is born*, unto us *a son is given*: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," Isa. ix. 6. 2. *The Parentage*,—"Behold *a Virgin* shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," Isa. vii. 14. 3. *The Family*,—"There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of *Jesse*, and a branch shall grow out of his roots," Isa. xi. 1—5. 4. *The Tribe*,—"The sceptre shall not depart from *Judah*, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come," Gen. xlix. 10. 5. *The Place*,—"Thou, *Bethlehem Ephratah*, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," Mic. v. 2. 6. *The Time*,—"*Seventy weeks* are determined upon thy people. . . . Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the

* The mode of reckoning by the Christian Era, was introduced in A.D. 532 by Dionysius Exignus; but both he and the venerable Bede in the following century, made the mistake which was authorised by Pope Eugenius IV. in A.D. 1431.

Prince shall be *seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks.* . . . And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself," Dan. ix. 24—26.*

God knowing Herod's thoughts even before he had formed them, told Joseph to "take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt," which on the death of Cleopatra, had become a Roman province, and where they would find a synagogue, and many of their own nation. Finding that he had been deceived by the Magi, Herod, from his bed of torment and suffering, gave orders that all the children at Bethlehem, under thirteen months, should be destroyed, when we have the beautiful, affecting, and most poetical idea of the mother of the tribe, whose grave was at Bethlehem, weeping over her murdered innocents—"Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not" (Matt. ii. 18). This massacre of thirty or forty babes is overlooked by Josephus, among the many cruelties which he relates of Herod.

For months Herod had to bear the greatest anguish of mind and of body; for while he was stretched on his bed with a disease too loathsome and too disgusting to describe, he was also tormented in mind by the thought of his past cruelties, especially of the murder of his lovely, beloved, and now lamented Mariamne. Was he penitent? Did he seek to make his peace with a forgiving Father? Alas! even on his death bed, he was commanding and entreating the slaughter of all the chief families and nobles of the kingdom, that there might at least be mourning at his death, if not for himself. At this time, Antipater, Herod's eldest son and heir, was found guilty of an attempt to poison his old and doting father, so as to hasten his own accession; and thus another son was condemned to death by his own father. On the same day Herod himself died at the age of seventy, after thirty-seven years' reign, leaving his kingdom to his three sons, Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and Philip. (Josephus, Ant. xvii. viii. 1.)

Archelaus being named in Herod's will as his successor,† took upon himself the care of Herod's funeral, which was conducted in the gorgeous style in which he had lived; the loathsome carcase, repul-

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* Ezra received his commission from Artaxerxes (Ezra vii. 11—26) 457 B.C.: Jesus was baptised for His public ministry, A.D. 26 (see Luke iv. 1, marg.), 457 and 26, equal 483 years; 62 and 7 weeks multiplied by 7 also make 483 days or years. Again:—Ezra's commission was dated 457 B.C.: Jesus was crucified when he was thirty-three years old:—457 and 33, equal 490; 70 weeks multiplied by 7 are also 490 days or years.

† Herod Philip, the eldest surviving son, who married the daughter of his murdered brother Aristobulus, lived at Rome, and had no kingdom left to him.

sive to the sight, and offensive to the smell, was wrapped in purple and the finest linen, with drugs and sweet spices, and crowned with the golden circlet and diadem. The long military funeral procession marched slowly and by short stages from Jericho where he died, to Herodion, where he was interred.

Let us pause a minute and think of what we have read:—when we see what human nature is, and of what vileness we are capable, how *humble* should it make us! When we see from what gross sins God's preventing grace keeps us, and in what happier times we are placed, how *thankful* should it make us!

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE LAW OF GOD.

THE term Law signifies the expressed revelation of the mind or will of a sovereign, or one in power; his authoritative declaration of what may, and what may not be done; and those in subjection to him are bound to obey his will thus declared to them. The Bible contains the inspired revelation of God's mind and will to us His creatures, and its authority is supreme and absolute. The laws it contains are of three sorts, political, ceremonial, and moral. When God selected Abraham's descendants, and formed them into a nation to be the depositaries of His truth, Rom. iii. 2, He declared Himself their King and Lawgiver; as such He gave them, through Moses, laws to regulate their intercourse with other nations, and for the administration of justice amongst themselves. These were for the *Jewish nation alone*, and are binding on no other, though they reveal the general principles of holiness, justice, and mercy which God approves. The ceremonial law was also *confined to the Jews*; it appointed the rites and ceremonies for their religious services; these all pointed to Christ, and revealed the way of salvation through Him, and when fulfilled by Him were abrogated; the substance being given, types were no longer needed: the remaining portion, God's moral law, is not confined to any nation, it is for mankind in general, beginning from the creation; it is the transcript of His character, the revelation of His mind as to what is right, and what wrong; and He being unchangable, the moral law must be so also.

It might well be thought superfluous to enforce upon Christians the authority of the moral law; but as there exists amongst us a denomination of Christians, active and zealous in making converts, who

maintain that the whole law is *utterly abolished* (we know of no such text in Scripture) and that believers have absolutely nothing to do with it, some considerations upon the subject may be useful.

The *authority* and the *penalty* of the law are distinct things; had God attached no penalty to the eating of the forbidden fruit, Adam would have been as much bound to abstain, as when God affixed the penalty of death to disobedience. Now believers in Christ *are* absolved from the penalty of sin, because Christ having suffered the whole of it on their behalf, it would be unrighteous to exact it from them; also they are delivered from all punishment, their surety having met all its demands in their stead; but this does *not* absolve them from the authority of the law, but rather adds to the obligation.

Subjection to law is a necessity of creature existence, the thing formed is the property, and at the disposal of the Creator; all God's works are subject to His will, Ps cxix. 91. Wherever the mind and will of the creature is perfectly conformed to that of its Creator, as in Heaven, there is perfect holiness and happiness; wherever, as in hell, there is utter opposition, there is absolute misery; on earth, holiness and happiness are in proportion to the conformity.

A king is one having power and authority to rule and require obedience to his laws; one who promulgated no law, exercised no authority, would be unworthy the name of king. God is king over the whole earth, Ps. xlvii. 7, so is Christ, Heb. i. 8. Can it be that He makes no laws, exerts no authority?

Sin is the transgression of the law, 1 John iii. 4; where no law is there is no transgression, Rom. iv. 15. The repeated exhortations in the Epistles, not to sin, prove that believers are under the authority of law which they are liable to transgress, for if there were no law, there could be no sin; Christians are told expressly they are sinners as well as others, 1 John i. 8. We are told that angels sinned, 2 Pet. ii. 4; they, too, are under law.

Christians are exhorted to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, Gal.v. 1. True, but this refers to the burdensome *ceremonies* of the Jewish ritual, Acts. xv. 10. Subjection to law is not bondage. Freedom and liberty are the boasted birthright of Englishmen, yet what nation so fully owns, so cheerfully submits to the authority of law? It is the just and clearly defined nature of our laws, and their strict impartial administration which constitutes our liberty, and promotes general safety and happiness; *lawlessness* always causes misery.

It is said that duty is a cold word; we should not require such an inducement to serve God. Be it so; but is the *thing* cold? Thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God with *all thy heart*, and thy neighbour

as thyself; on these two commandments hang all the *law;* love is the fulfilling of the law, Matt. xxii. 36—40; Rom. xiii. 8—10. Can a *cold heart* keep the law? Impossible.

Again it is objected Christians have no need of law; Christ's perfect example is set before them, and they are to imitate Him. We *quite* agree with this, but what is the example He sets us? *Perfect obedience to the law;* had He failed in even one point, that would have been sin; and in *that* He would *not* have been an example for us to follow. Though Himself infallible, Christ constantly appealed to the *law* to decide points of right and wrong. "What is written?" "How readest thou?" When tempted by Satan, His answer was always an appeal to the written word—the revelation of the mind and will, that is, the *law* of God, as that which He *alone* acknowledged as His rule of action ("thou shalt" "thou shalt not" must be law), and the most prominent feature in His character was His loving obedience to the will, or law of God, Ps. xl. 8; John iv. 34; vi. 38.

The great feature in the new covenant is the promise that the Christian shall be brought into conformity to the will and law of God; that which before had failed, though enforced by severe penalty, Ezek. xviii. 20; Rom. vi. 23, because man's heart was averse to it, shall now prevail, because the heart, renewed by grace, is taught to love and reverence its authority, Jer. xxxi. 31—34; Heb. viii. 10; x. 16, the righteousness of the law fulfilled *for* us by Christ, being fulfilled *in* us by the Spirit, Rom. viii. 4; yet forasmuch as the old nature is not utterly destroyed till death, obedience to the law of God cannot be perfect even in the regenerate, Eccles. vii. 20; there must be a struggle, intense in proportion to the vigour of life in each, and never ceasing till at death one obtains a complete victory, and the other becomes extinguished. If there is *no* struggle, it does not prove there is no *sin*, but rather, it may be, no grace, no opposition to the sinful nature which each inherits; Rom. vii. reveals to us the struggle for mastery in a *renewed* heart, whether, as we believe, it is St Paul's own experience or not. Does any unregenerate heart "*delight* in the law of God" which all condemns him? Does he with the mind "serve the law of God"?

It may be thought by some that this is a mere question of words, since holiness is professedly sought by both; but we do not think so. It is a matter of importance, especially to young and ignorant Christians, to have the rule of their daily life clearly defined, and that in accordance with the will of God; and this we think can only be by accepting the authority of the law of God, Psalm cxix. 11. Does not God require this from each and all of us? Josh. i. 8; John xiii. 17; xiv. 15, besides which it is dishonouring to God. The law of God is perfect, Ps. xix. 7, spiritual, holy, just and

good, Rom. vii. 12, 14; has He less delight in it than formerly? Christ magnified the law and made it honourable, Is. xlii. 21. Matt. v. 17, and shall man despise it?

Let us strive to know the will of God in this matter. We find in the Bible it is what God approves, and would have us obey; that it should regulate not only our words and actions, but the thoughts and desires of our inmost hearts; and to satisfy God, to merit His approval, our obedience must be *perfect* in every point, Jas. ii 10; this being impossible to man, none can be justified by his own works, Rom. iii. 20; Gal. ii. 16; Eph. ii. 8, 9; Tit. iii. 5; but Christ has fulfilled it for him, Rom. x. 4, and suffered the penalty in his stead, Gal. iii. 13, and now offers this salvation freely to all those who believe and trust in Him, are pardoned and accepted in Him, Acts xiii. 38, 39; Eph. i. 6. Man is slow to believe this, and strives to work *for* life, but the more he strives, the more clearly he sees the extent of the law's requirement; until at last, led to despair of accomplishing his own salvation, he is taught by the Spirit to welcome and accept Christ as his Saviour, Gal. iii. 24, and in Him finds rest and peace. But the law of God having thus led him to Christ is not to be cast wholly aside; thenceforth the principle of spiritual life imparted to him yearns after conformity to the mind and will of God, and he obeys it not in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit, Rom. vii. 6.

M.

Usefulness.

"It is not only large associations and wealthy societies, with vast machinery, that have won great things for the Church of God. How much has been accomplished by means of solitary individuals, single minds and single hearts, bringing to bear upon others the power of that special gift with which God has endowed them for His service. Of these latter, also, it may be said, it is not so much by what they have themselves performed, as by the activity they have infused into other minds."

SCRIPTURE PHILOLOGY.

No. xi. Our Lord's Idioms. (*Continued.*)

Matt. xviii. 10, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these *little ones;* for I say unto you, That in heaven *their angels* do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

It is written in the Scriptures, "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ let him be anathema maranatha!" Solemn, yet touching words are these; perhaps they have at times awakened a feeling corresponding to his who had been so lately blind, and which the same way of expressing it will best convey—"who is the Lord, that I may love Him?" And this question, when we, children of the dust, attempt to realize such an idea of the Divine nature as shall distinguish the persons without dividing the substance, is more easily answered by the heart than by the understanding.

Though *practical* love is that which alone can approve us as true Christians either to ourselves, or to others, yet we do not believe the deed exists without the emotion in a true saint: the heart owns the divine fellowship, though with wrestling Jacob the spirit must for the present content itself without the knowledge of the Secret Name. Since however it still remains that the lowly disciple whom we have seen, is the recognised representative of the Master whom we have not seen, our love to every one of these "little ones" becomes the test of our love to Him.

It is remarkable that most Commentators take this phrase "little ones" to signify either, spiritually, babes in Christ; or naturally, little children, such as that one He "set in the midst of them" whom He was instructing in the dispositions of a new heart. We ourselves do not adopt either view, but consider the term to be idiomatic, and equivalent to low, humble, mean, and therefore liable to be regarded as *despicable*. "I am small and of no reputation," said one Saint in his own view of his position. "I am less than the least of all Saints," said another, not less distinguished for the possession of grace.

It seems to us to be implied in the warning, "take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones," that the words have this meaning of low, humble, in birth, rank, attainments, and as such, open to contempt. By way of confirmation, we find, Judges vi. 15, Gideon thus expostulating with the angel; "Oh, my Lord, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am *the least* in my father's house." Again,

in Zech. xiii. 7, it has the same sense; "I will turn my hand upon the *little ones*;" namely, the helpless lowly flock of the smitten shepherd. And did not the Master Himself condescend to be born to the same lot, and so become "despised and rejected of men?" A friend has sent us a good illustration of this idiomatic use of the phrase "little one,"—the Brahmin despises the Pariah Christian.

But however contemptible a Christian may be in the eyes of the world, and especially a poor and low-born Christian, who is one not only "little," but "the least" of Christ's brethren, yet he ranks in such high estimation above, that his guardian angel always beholds the face of our Father who is in heaven. His angel beholds the face of God; that is to say, he stands before him as ministers of state before a King; as Joseph stood before Pharoah after he had received the name of Zephnath Paaneah—whatever that Egyptian title of office might signify. Now, what should they stand in the presence for, if it be not to receive commands, and to make reports in reference to their ministry for these same lowly, favoured heirs of salvation?

The Agency of Angels,

is a subject much out of sight with us; and perhaps naturally so, because "God hath not put into subjection to angels *this* world to come, whereof we speak;" which was once future, but is not so since the regal exaltation of the Man Christ Jesus: at least, not wholly future. No; even angels could not achieve what has been, and yet must be done in order to the government in everlasting prosperity and peace of this world to come, referred to in some mystic manner, Ps. viii. 6, as we learn from Heb. ii. 8, both as to its exalted Ruler, and as to its universal extent, which far exceeds the boundaries of what is visible. The affairs, however, of the Old Dispensation, and of Israel in "the habitable earth" of Canaan, were, we have reason to believe, exclusively committed to angels; and accordingly their appearance and intervention was of very frequent occurrence in the Holy Land. Hence the Jewish Talmudic Treatises contain very much information about the nature, and order, and ministries, of the Heavenly Host—apocryphal of course, but so far as it is sanctioned by corresponding divine revelation, both very interesting and of some value.

The names of several angels, besides Michael and Gabriel, have been handed down among the Jews from a very remote antiquity: and their books tell more about the "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers," than we know of from the Apostolic writings; and throw traditional light on the Cherubim, and "chariots, and

horses of fire;" and on the Offannim, or wheels instinct with intelligence, often described in the Old Testament, though with much brevity: they call them "the wheels of the Universe," in allusion to their agency in the motion of the sidereal heavens.

The Rabbins do not appear to be of opinion that the great "Angel of the Covenant" was Messiah, though many English divines, with little reason, affirm this! The existence of "the Living Word" in heaven with the Father, they fully recognise, but regard the presiding angel who represented God, only as the chief of the heavenly hierarchy, in connection with whose presence was "THE VOICE"—one of the "diversities of operations" of the Holy Spirit, often heard in the Holy of Holies, which gave directions to Moses; or speaking from above elsewhere, encouraged the Patriarchs, because they were the confessors of the only true God among lapsed families of men. And this view appears to us to be confirmed in our own New Testament Scriptures, both by St. Peter and St. Jude, if those Apostles may be understood to refer to the vision described, Zech. iii. 1—7, in those remarkable chapters where they speak of the impure apostates: indeed St. Jude expressly says, verse 9, that that angel was Michael; and thus he is called, Dan. x. 21, "Michael, your *Prince*."

Certainly the above teaching is of a piece with that of the Holy Spirit by Stephen and other prophets of the New Testament, who tell us that "the law was given by the disposition of angels," and "ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator;" and if the law itself,—that central, and circumfluent light of the whole Dispensation,—was given by these exalted, yet creature-agents of the Most High, we may well think that they were also employed to administer all the other affairs of that friend of God, Abraham, with whom the covenants were made, and of his descendants according to the promises contained in them. Accordingly we find

Angels often communicated with *Abraham* himself, Gen. xviii.

An angel's voice cheers *Hagar* and her son, and opens her eyes to behold a well of water in the desert, Gen. xvi.

An angel goes before *Eliezer*, because he is Abraham's steward, to order human movements, so that he should find the right wife for Isaac at the right place. *How* he influenced the motions and proceedings of Rebecca that she should come to the well first of the many maidens who drew water there, and would have been glad enough to see a golden bracelet on each nervous wrist, we know not; but he did do so. Gen. xxiv. 7.

An angel wrestled with Jacob, the next heir of promise in rotation, and taught that humble man, little in his own sight, that if faith can prevail with God, and so under its mighty influence, human

strength (or weakness, for it is all the same) against angelic might, then surely its possessor had not so much occasion to be afraid of flesh and blood at that forthcoming dreaded interview with his reckless brother Esau. Gen. xxxii. 24.

And evil angels, too, as well as good ones, appear as agents in the affairs of men, through all the changes and chances of this mortal life. How pregnant of suggestion are those notices in the Book of Job of the source of all *his* afflictions!

We are not disposed to think that angelic beings *directly* influence our hearts and affections; we believe this kind of operation to be exclusively in the power of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost Himself. *Indirectly*, and as one man influences another, angels appear to be acting upon us, and for, or against us, continually. In short, to speak our whole minds, we think it is intimated sometimes in Scripture that angelic interferences may be the final causes of natural and providential occurrences, although philosophy loves to trace these things up to higher and higher, and deeper and deeper operations of elements and atoms; but when all is said that chemistry can develope, or our natural philosophy demonstrate, we are left so far as science of all kinds, even including the highest, is concerned, in the same inscrutable darkness that prevailed when Alchemy filled the Professor's chair of the former, and sightless Credulity of the latter delightful pursuit of the mind. In this rationalistic day, one is almost afraid to show any sympathy with that *true* philsopher's feelings who found no other way to account for the varying seasons of the year, than by calling in the aid of that VOICE which

> "* * * Bid *His angels* turn askance the globes of earth,
> Twice ten degrees and more from the sun's axis."

By way of offering our younger fellow-students some approach to a summary of angelic attributes and operations, we observe that, from their numbers, one name of God Himself—"the Lord of Hosts"—is derived, see Dan. vii. 10; Ps. lix. 5.

Their strength—they are "greater in power and might" than men, 2 Pet. ii. 11.

They assume human forms; thus we read of "the man Gabriel;" and it would appear, from 2 Cor. xi. 14, as if Satan can assume the form also of an angel of light.

Their motions are incalculably swift, Dan. ix. 21, therefore they are represented winged, and said to fly.

They are always obedient and good; as it is written "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

They minister to the faithful, with all these attributes, Heb. i. 14.

They guard, and defend them, Matt. xviii. 10.

They are present witnesses of our goings on. 1 Tim. v. 21.

Their knowledge is limited of course, being only creatures like ourselves, Matt. xxiv. 36.

Our Lord Jesus Christ himself created them, Col. i. 16.

His work and labours of love, reconciled them to God's salvation of our *guilty* human race, Col. i. 20.

And if they do not now so much appear in the work and progress of human deliverance as in the typical Church, it surely is, because this work requires One to carry it through all its stages, originally of so exalted a nature that the chiefest angels themselves count it an honour to join that Hymn of praise before the throne of the Lamb, and to look into "the mystery" of this redemption hid from ages and generations, but now by them inspected with everlasting wonder, and delight.

We ask no excuse for concluding this paper with lines, well known to some of our readers, because they are worthy of any English bard though of the loftiest fame.

"And is there care in heaven, and is there love
In heavenly spirits to us creatures base—
That may compassion of our evils move?
There is: else much more wretched were the case
Of men than beasts: but O the exceeding grace
Of highest God! who loves His creatures so,
And all His works with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed angels He sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked man, to serve His wicked foe.
How oft do they their silver bowers leave,
To come to succour us that succour want!
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The flitting skies, like flying pursuivant,
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!
They for us fight, they watch, and duly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant;
And all for love, and nothing for reward:
O why should heavenly God to men have such regard!

Tenby. G. N. S.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS.

ON GOSPEL MINISTERS.

An eminently useful man, Dr. Mayo, of Cheam, observed once at a clerical meeting, near Epsom, "We have plenty of Gospel ministers in these parts, but no Gospel congregations." He wanted the members of our meeting to lay that fact to heart. Another good, and successful man, John East, of Bath, once said of a certain preacher of repute with some, "Ah, there is very little Gospel there." "Very little Gospel"—the form of the remark is suggestive; it seems there may be some—a taste of sweetness here and there—in sermons, but they are not, as they should be, sweet throughout; and there may be some things and statements relative to the Gospel and forming a part of it, contained in a sermon, while yet the matter and spirit that would justify us in calling it "the preaching that saves them that believe," are wanting.

We received a sermon by post the other day, printed in the form of a tract, entitled "The Better Covenant," which had been delivered by a good man, considered to be somewhat eminent as a Gospel minister in the district where he lives; yet in this tract there is so great an intermixture of what is *not* Gospel, that the reader is forcibly reminded of Daniel's Image;—there is "the head of gold," Christ's name often, and His mediation; there is the "bust of silver," something else of the Covenant of Grace; but for all it purports to be an example of evangelical preaching, there is plenty of the "brass" of *theoretical* assurance—and as to "the feet, part of iron and part of clay," instead of something answering to well-set feet, by the aid of which a thought-burdened, praying, careful way-farer, may learn to walk with God in comfort and peace, this good man, as we notwithstanding believe him to be, teaches that the new covenant is the better of the two, because "it accepts of sincerity, instead of perfection," as if sincerity was a quality in man that had not been vitiated by the fall, as well as every other. How much more distinct a sound of the trumpet is given in the terms, "walking by faith," and "the obedience of faith," than walking by sincerity, and the obedience of sincerity. Our good brother also tells his flock, that "the rigour of the law is modified by Christ's mediation," as if he did not understand that when the time was come that the full debt due by sinful man was to be paid, the Lord Jesus *paid it all*—as is written in the prophet—"it was exacted, and He was answerable," and at the end of the first head of his subject he says, "The Gospel

provides an indulgence for relenting and returning sinners, for that there is mercy with God."

When the sermons of Milner, and Walker, and such successful ministers as they were, are searched for such statements as these, they are searched in vain; and may not the difference of their Gospel explain in a great measure how it comes to pass that now there are many "Gospel ministers, but not Gospel congregations?"

How often, too, the repetition of the words, "Christ died for sinners," may be heard from the lips of ministers. It is thought by some no doubt, that "they do not reach the heart, because the Holy Spirit does not apply them (for, say such), if this is not preaching the Gospel, what is?" And yet, indeed, those precious words unexplained to the anxious inquirer whose understanding is held in bands of darkness, go for nothing more than sound. The Eunuch had such words passing through his mind; but like golden money through the hands of an almoner, they were of little use to *him*. "Come up and teach me what they mean, dear messenger from God," he cried. Ah! now he has a *Gospel minister* at his elbow—now such an one takes that alabaster box in his hand, and breaks it to pieces, and fills both the air and the heart of this Ethiop with the rich perfume of salvation "by grace through faith." "*He* went on his way rejoicing!" Could he do less?

"*Christ* died for sinners." *Who is* this Stranger in our world who had a glory with the Father before the world was? *Who* enjoined Him to come and die; and *what* feeling towards lost man does that injunction imply? *What bearing* had such a death upon the ONE full of the attributes of perfection, who sent Him? *What* bearing on a world lying under the oppressive, deadly weight both of original and actual sin?

"He died for sinners." Will that do away with my death—or how is it? Does it render my salvation possible; or do more than that?—and what? Does it bring me naturally under new obligations, and by new laws of constraint? Does it impose the belief *of* it all upon me as a *condition*, or create that belief in my heart by its own living truth? Is it all true whether I believe it or not? and is it at my peril that I "neglect so great salvation?"

When the half-enlightened minds of us poor ministers try, thus, to count out for others these "unsearchable riches of Christ," how are we sometimes made to feel our past neglects, and present deficiencies, and to cry with the willing, straitened evangelist of Israel, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts," and O, how unfit to speak in His name, to tell of His love, and to carry His messages of, for the

future, everlasting reconciliation, righteousness, and peace, to this lost world!

ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF FAITH.

It seems to be this: as infants, we believe "God is," because everybody does so, and our parents especially among the rest. There is no instinct within us contradicting the fact; probably the contrary; for although man has no innate ideas, he certainly has innate instincts. Then, such belief accounts for all we see around us; and to attribute it to all men is not much, for St. James says that even "devils believe and tremble;" it may, or it may not have influence enough to produce as much devotion at least as many of the heathen appear to have possessed.

By-and-by there comes a time when we in Christendom are touched, awakened, surprised by *Christianity*, or the good news of the Gospel. The Holy Spirit is in this. Then the distant, dimly seen, and perhaps totally neglected Creator, comes near; is found to love, to have approached and shewn himself in our world ("he that hath seen me hath seen the Father);" and *now* our faith changes; it is as if a new faith started into life within us, which, for the first time we find to be practical, over-mastering, ever-living in our heart of hearts, and not to be mistaken. This faith we call saving, or the faith of Christ.

It is too manifest that many never have more than the first kind of faith; which, as the heart hardens by the love and frequent indulgence in sin year after year, becomes nothing more than mere opinion, and opinion influences no man to follow or avoid either this or that; for thus opinion differs from belief.

It seems quite possible by encouraging infidelity of heart, that a mortal man may get over fears, and uncomfortable surmises, so as to live without them, partly because he has dismissed the thought of God, and of judgment to come; but none can be sure that at any moment all the thoughts and terrors that belong to guilty rebellion may not rise up within him in all their most awful array. There are many cases on record of a very remarkable operation of the mind and memory suddenly brought into action by circumstances. It is said the devil shewed our Lord all the kingdoms of the world *in a moment of time*. Such an experience as we mean many have been conscious of. In drowning, this consciousness has been awakened, and though a few seconds only seem to have passed away, before the person whose breath was suspended has been taken out of the water, yet there was time enough for all the actions of the life to pass in review before the soul; and the memory seems at such times to be preternaturally renewed. This remarkable fact has been confessed to

also by persons who have not been at the time under any bodily distress so as to be the cause of it: deep conviction, or anxious care, has acted in this way. That is a curious passage in 1 Cor. xiv. 25—"And *thus* are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so, falling on his face," &c.

This train of thought recalls that description by Scott of the traditionary summons at the Cross of Edinburgh of the souls of those who were so shortly to die in the battle of Flodden Field.

"I cite you by each deadly sin,
That e'er hath soiled your heart within;
I cite you by each brutal lust,
That e'er defiled your mortal dust;
By each o'ermastering passion's tone,
By the dark grave, and dying groan;
By wrath, by pride, by guilty fear,
* * * * to answer and appear!"

It is thus that conscience arrays the phalanx of accusers before the near, anticipated trial.

G. M. S.

The Teacher in his School.

NOTES OF A BIBLE LESSON FOR A SENIOR CLASS, ON THE TWO COVENANTS.

GEN. xxi. 1—21.

ON first reading this simple narrative of domestic life, our sympathies are probably called out in favour of Hagar and Ishmael, and their ejection seems to us, as it did to the venerable patriarch Abraham, "very grievous." But God endorsed Sarah's decision, bidding Abraham "hearken unto her voice in all that she had said," and the bondwoman and her son were cast out. Sarah's evident fear was lest Ishmael should share the inheritance which amongst the Jews was the inalienable right of the first born, Deut. xxi. 15, 17; 2 Chron. xxi. 1—4, and was justly Isaac's, he being the child of promise. God's original promise to Abram, on calling him out from his country, his kindred, and his father's house, and sending him to a distant land, was that He would make of him a great nation, Gen. xii. 1, 2. A long delay ensued, and upon Abram pleading with God that, as he was still childless, Eliezer his servant might be his heir, God vouchsafes him more direct assurance that a child of his own should be his heir, Gen. xv. 4, 5. Ishmael's birth was the result of this promise, not by God's direct purpose, but because He permitted Sarah's counsel, Gen. xvi., to be carried out; and after his birth, Abraham seems to have given up all thought of any other son, for when

God reiterated His promise, adding the assurance that the child in question should be Sarah's son, Abraham says, "O that Ishmael might live before thee," Gen. xvii. 15—22.

The Apostle Paul, in Gal. iv. 24, speaks of these two sons, one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman as an allegory, by which God intended to typify His two covenants.

Hagar and her son Ishmael, the type of those inheriting under the first covenant given from Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answering to the Jerusalem which now is and is in bondage with her children, Gal. iv. 25.

Sarah and Isaac, the type of those inheriting under the new covenant ratified on Calvary, and answering to the Jerusalem above which is free, and the mother of all who believe, Gal. iv. 26.

Moses was the mediator of the first covenant, Ex. xx. 19, Deut. v. 5, and inaugurated his appearance in that capacity by the miracle of turning water into blood, emblematic of death, which was the end of the ministration written and graven in stones, 2 Cor. iii. 7.

Jesus is the mediator of the second or new covenant, the ministration of the Spirit, which results in eternal life, a result which He intended to typify by His first miracle, when at Cana of Galilee He turned water into wine, John ii. (Blood is among eastern nations an emblem of death, wine of life.)

The law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John i. 17.

The inheritance promised to Ishmael was every possible earthly honour, and a country rich in gold, Gen. xvii. 20; xxv. 16, 18; ii. 11, 12. To Isaac, in spite of the bright expectation of the future, his present condition was on of pilgrimage, and to his descendants four hundred years bondage and affliction in the land of Egypt, Gen xv. 13, called by God an iron furnace, Jer. xi. 4, and then the possession of the land flowing with milk and honey.

Hagar and her descendants are taken by God as types of the Jews in our Saviour's and the Apostles' time, down to the present day, who priding themselves on being descended from Abraham according to the flesh, were not descended from him according to the spirit, John viii. 39. Hence the reason for their being like Hagar and Ishmael cast out, and remaining so to the present time.

Sarah and her descendants are types of those, who by faith and patience, inherit the promise of everlasting life given by God to all who believe on His Son, John i. 12; x. 28.

The Jews as a nation did not see, as Abraham did, that Christ was the end of the law for righteousness, John viii. 56, but vainly hoped to be justified by keeping the law given on Mount Sinai, Gal. ii. 16; hence they fell short of the adoption of sons, Rom. viii. 14,—17, and being unprofitable servants were cast out, John viii. 35, 36.

And so likewise will be cast out in the last day all who hope to be justified in God's sight by good works, which (as our Church teaches in her Articles) except done in faith are sin. Art. xi, xii, xiii.

Well may we pray with the disciples of old, "Lord increase our faith!"

S. B.

NOTES OF LESSONS ON THE LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.

(Designed as Occasional Supplementary Lessons for Bible Classes).

IV. St. Philip.

This Apostle was one of those who resided at Bethsaida, on the western shore of the Lake of Tiberias, a place to which our Lord often resorted, and from whence He chose three of His Apostles. It was not far from Capernaum (Mark. vi. 5; viii. 22), but no trace of its remains has been found by modern travellers. As one of the towns of Galilee, its inhabitants were held in great disrepute by the Jews, yet the Saviour chose some of His followers from this locality, and was himself called a Galilean, as a term of reproach.

Philip was chosen to be an Apostle the day following the call of Andrew and Peter, and having been previously a disciple of John the Baptist, and thus prepared to acknowledge the Messiahship of Jesus, he instantly complied with the call. From that time he was a constant follower of the Lord. The first practical proof he gave of his faith, and of a desire to advance His kingdom, was by seeking out Nathanael (see the Lesson on St. Bartholomew) and bringing him to Jesus (John i. 43—51). Philip's answer to Nathanael's objection, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" was the common-sense argument which every Christian should use,—"Come and see." If men would "taste and see how gracious the Lord is," they would find how needless are their doubts.

The next special mention of this Apostle is in reference to the miracle of feeding the five thousand in the neighbourhood of Bethsaida (Luke ix. 10). When Jesus saw the multitude hungry at eventide, He asked Philip, "whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? And this He said to prove [or try] him, for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip answered, two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little" (John vi. 5—7). It is not difficult to see the Lord's reason for addressing the question to Philip, for he knew the locality intimately from having been brought up there, and if it *had* been possible to obtain food for so large a number, he could have pointed out the way of doing it. Perhaps, too, his faith was not of the strongest, resting more on evidence than on simple trust. He did not seem to be able to look to Christ as able to supply all their wants, except through secondary causes. So we are too apt to look only to the latter, and not to Him as the primal fountain of all good.

Even at a much later period, it is evident Philip had not attained a very clear idea of our Lord's character or mission. His remark in the midst of Christ's parting discourse before He suffered, "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us," and our Saviour's reply (John xiv. 7—10), indicate a want of that higher faith which recognised Jesus as "God manifest in the flesh," and the tendency to confine its exercise by the power of the senses.

The Gospels only once more specially mention this Apostle, when the Gentile "proselytes of the gate," called Greeks, desired to see Jesus, and came to Philip to prefer their request. He seems to have hesitated how to act, first consulted Andrew, and then went with him to ask our Lord's permission (John xii. 20—22). He is named, also, as present with the rest of the Apostles when their risen Lord appeared among them (Acts i. 13).

After our Lord's ascension, we have no certain account of his proceedings. Early historians tell us that he went into upper Asia, and preached among an idolatrous people at Hierapolis in Phrygia. He urged them to relinquish their vain offerings and dragon-worship, and the magistrates, enraged at his success, cast him into prison; subsequently he was scourged, and hung by the neck against a pillar. So he died,—an example of activity in serving his Master in life, and of constancy unto death,—teaching us all first to know Jesus for ourselves, and then, like him, to lead others to the Saviour.

V. St. Jude.

In the first verse of his Epistle, this Apostle calls himself the "brother of James," and in Matt. xiii. 55, we read that the Jews, speaking of Christ, asked, "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?" By St. Matthew he is called "Lebbæus, whose surname was Thaddæus," the one meaning "a person zealous for God," the other "prudence and understanding." His relationship to our Lord is accounted for in two ways,—by some his mother Mary, the wife of Cleophas or Alphæus, is supposed to have been the sister or cousin of the Virgin (John xix. 25),—and by others he is conjectured to have been altogether of another family, and the son of Joseph by a former wife.

The *silence* of Scripture on all these points is remarkable and significant. Such information would be very interesting to us, but is not necessary. It is well to observe how little notice is taken of the companions and followers of our Lord in the Gospels; Christ Himself is the great theme set before us, and they are only spoken of as "workers together with Him." If we do anything for Him let us feel as St. Paul did, "Yet not I, but Christ," for He worketh in us. Gal. ii. 20; Col. i. 29.

One event only is recorded of St. Jude in the Gospels. On the night before His betrayal, our Lord said to the disciples, "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. Judas saith unto Him (not Iscariot), Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" He did not understand an internal, secret, spiritual, and mysterious revelation to the soul, whereby the Saviour's promise would be fulfilled; "My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John xiv. 21—23). The Spirit of God can alone reveal this truth to us, and make us partakers of its privileges. The natural mind does not understand it any more than in the case of Jude, who thought his Master's reign would be a temporal one, like that of David and Solomon, and not as it really is, in the hearts of His people.

While this incident proves that Jude at that time had not learnt the deep things of God, his brief Epistle shows us how he afterwards rejoiced in the "common salvation" which all may obtain through faith, and how sternly he denounced all those who were, in his time, corrupting the purity of the Gospel. Thus we find him an earnest lover of the truth, uncompromising towards those who would follow their own evil courses, but rejoicing in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.

After our Lord's ascension, it is said that Jude preached the Gospel in Judæa and Galilee, then through Samaria and Idumæa, and in the cities of Arabia and Mesopotamia. He

afterwards laboured as an Apostle with great success in Persia, and it is stated that, for his bold and open reproofs of the superstitions of the Magi, he was at last cruelly put to death. Early Church history contains an interesting account of some of Jude's descendants. The Roman Emperor Domitian (A.D. 81—96) enquired after David's posterity, and was told that two of the grandchildren of Jude, "the Lord's brother," were still living. He sent for them, and found them to be poor labouring men, possessing only thirty-nine acres of land which they tilled themselves. He asked them about the kingdom of Christ, and as to its character. They told him it was not of this world, but of a heavenly nature, and that it would be revealed when the end came, and when Jesus would return in all His glory. The Emperor sent them away, satisfied that they were too humble to give him cause to fear for the safety of his throne, so they continued to be witnesses of the truth of Christ to the Church.

VI. St. Simon Zelotes.

This Apostle is supposed to have been the same Simon referred to as one of the relatives of our Lord in Matt. xiii. 55, quoted in the preceding Lesson; and in that case would be the brother of James and Jude. The name, "Zelotes," by which he was distinguished on his call to the Apostolic office has led some to consider him to be a separate person from the son of Cleophas and Mary; but it was probably given to him, either because he belonged at the time to the Jewish sect of the Zealots, or in consequence of some warmth of natural temper by which he was distinguished, just as the sons of Zebedee were surnamed "Boanerges," or sons of Thunder. In Matt. x. 4 he is called "Simon the Canaanite," but this word, in the original, does not signify the country from which he came, but the same as Zelotes —"zeal."

He is not mentioned, separate from the other Apostles, by any of the Evangelists. We may learn from this fact that if the words and actions of Apostles are unrecorded for men to remember, we ought not to seek such notice of what we do, but rest assured that every thing, done in secret or in public, is recorded by the God whose we are and whom we serve, and will be rewarded by Him, whether it be good or bad.

Tradition — always uncertain and conflicting, and therefore never authoritative in anything which is essential to be known or believed—is especially complicated in the case of the history of this Apostle. Two separate accounts of his labours, after Christ's ascension, are preserved,—one that he planted Christianity in Egypt, Cyrene and Africa, and that he penetrated even to the then remote isles of Britain, where he was persecuted by the barbarous natives and put to death;—another that he succeeded James as bishop of Jerusalem, and that forty-three years afterwards the Emperor Trajan caused him to be crucified with great torture, in his desire to exterminate all who remained of the race of David.

In either case, he is another witness to the truth of the Gospel, and to the power of the love of it, to enable all to endure to the end that they may be saved. Happy may we be if, in more tranquil and favoured times, we can pursue our course without wavering, and so at last obtain, if not the martyr's, yet the faithful believer's crown of glory! W. S.

THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS.

Notes of Lessons to an Adult Bible Class on the Epistle to the Ephesians.

In studying any of the Epistles we should remember that we are studying the history, not of a nation, or of an individual, but of a Church. Our attention will be directed to the time and circumstances under which that Church was first planted; we shall trace the history as far as it is related in the Acts of the Apostles, and then gather from the Epistle itself how that Church had progressed, what warnings were addressed to, or what commendations were bestowed upon, the Christians of that Church.

The Epistle to the Ephesians is full of instruction, both as relates to the Church which had been established at Ephesus, and as regards Christians of the present day. It may be divided into two parts, the first three chapters being doctrinal, the last three practical.

Chapter I.—Speaks of the privileges to which, as Christians, they had been called.

Chapter II.—The change which had been wrought in them.

Chapter III.—The love and grace which had wrought that change.

Chapter IV.—Speaks of the Christian's profession.

Chapter V.—The Christian's duties.

Chapter VI. — The Christian's armour.

LESSON I.—Chapter I.

At what date did St. Paul write this Epistle? Where from? How long had the Church existed at Ephesus? Who first preached the Gospel there? See St. Paul's second missionary journey, A.D. 55, Acts xviii. 19, 20, where Ephesus is first mentioned. He "left *them* there." Who? Priscilla and Aquila: see verses 2 and 18. Notice God's great purposes of good. They had been expelled from Rome, now they had become the friends and companions of St. Paul ("my helpers in Christ Jesus"), and are left at Ephesus to take charge of the infant Church which had just been planted. Apollos, mighty in the Scriptures, visits Ephesus; Aquila and Priscilla instruct him in the way of God more perfectly, and then he is sent to Corinth to water what St. Paul had planted.

Acts xix. St. Paul's third missionary journey. He fulfils his promise to visit Ephesus, ver. 1 and 2. How long did he remain? ver. 10. What miracles were wrought there? ver. 11, 12, 15. What proofs of conversion did the people give? ver. 18—20. From this we gather of what sort of disposition were these people of Ephesus; enquirers, willing to be taught and when convinced that they were wrong, ready to give up all for Christ. Notice the value of the books they destroyed.

What had been the religion of the people of Ephesus? Acts xix. 24—27. Worshippers of the goddess Diana. See the uproar that followed; here was warmth and earnestness enough in a wrong cause.

After this St. Paul went into Macedonia, and sailed for Syria. "Passing by" Ephesus he sends for the elders of the Church, Acts xx. 16, 17; addresses them, ver. 32; and takes an affectionate farewell, ver. 36—38. We read nothing more of Ephesus

in the Acts of the Apostles. We must now turn to the Epistle to see what sort of Christians these people of Ephesus had become.

See how St. Paul addresses them in this first chapter of the Epistle, ver. 1. He calls them saints and faithful in Christ Jesus; how great the change which must have taken place in them, how much of prayer and earnestness, what great growth in grace, and holiness of life, before St. Paul would thus address them! Instead of the magnificent temple of Diana, he speaks of spiritual blessings in heavenly places, ver. 3; instead of being worshippers of a false goddess, he tells them of their adoption to be children of God. And to what is it that they were thus chosen in him? Ver. 4, to be "holy;" ver. 6, to the "praise of the glory of His grace."

Accepted in God's beloved Son, ver. 6, they were chosen to be holy, blameless, loving, living to His praise and glory.

Let us apply this to ourselves.

1.—What is it we have in Him? Verse 7. Redemption;—all the rich blessings which that word implies. Deliverance from the power of sin, and all other blessings purchased through His blood.

2.—What is it He looks for in us? Verse 12. That we should *be* to His praise; live to Him; "Do all to the glory of God;" "Live unto the Lord."

3.—What is the inheritance we have obtained through Him? Ver. 11, 14, 18.

All these privileges and blessings are ours. See St. Paul's thankfulness on account of the faith and love manifested by these people, ver. 15, 16. Nine years before they were heathens, worshipping a graven image, practising witchcraft; now, how changed! Some of us can look back upon nine years of our lives. Have we made as much progress? If St. Paul had been writing to us, could he call us "saints and faithful?" Could he thank God for our "faith and love?"

LESSON II.—CHAPTER II.—THE CHANGE WHICH HAD BEEN WROUGHT IN THEM.

Throughout the chapter the strongest possible contrast is drawn between,—

I.—What they were, and its dreadful consequences; and

II.—What by grace they had become, and its blessed results.

I. Notwithstanding the grandeur of their city, the magnificence of their temple, the value of their books, &c., the Apostle tells them plainly, ver. 1, that they were "dead." Notice in what sense dead, — "spiritually," — dead to heavenly things.

Ver. 3. "Children of wrath;" how dreadful to be under the wrath of God who is a "consuming fire!" Heb. xii. 29.

Verse 12. "Without Christ;" count up, if it were possible, all the blessings which we have in Him, and see how great the loss included in the words "without Christ."

Ver. 13. "Far off;" how great that distance!

Notice the dreadful consequences of being in this state.

Verse 2.—They "walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air." *This world;* "Be not conformed to this world;" "The world passeth away and the lust thereof;" "*The prince of the power*," &c. "The prince of this world hath nothing in me," John xiv. 30. "Ye are of your father the devil," John viii. 44.

Verse 12. They were "without hope and without God." There is one place only where hope never enters; but how sad to be living in

this life without hope—"without God"—without His blessing—without His presence!

II.—What by grace they had become.

Ver. 1 and 5. "Quickened"—made alive; see John v. 21. Alive to God, to spiritual things.

Ver. 6. "Raised up to heavenly places."

Ver. 8. "Saved through faith;" all the blessings which accompany salvation through Christ.

Ver. 13. "Made nigh;" contrast this with the "far off." Draw nigh unto God, and He will draw nigh unto you.

Notice the blessed results of this change.

Ver. 10. "His workmanship, created unto good works." Notice the meaning of the word "workmanship." If the workmanship of a watch, for example, is good, we shall expect the watch to keep time correctly; the better the workmanship, the more perfect will be the work. It is God's workmanship here spoken of, and to what end? Created unto "good works," what holy living, what earnestness in God's service, ought to be the result of this "work" in our hearts!

Ver. 19. "Fellow-citizens" and "household"—the meaning of a household; the family life implied.

Ver. 20. "Built up an holy temple," see 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

Ver. 22. An "habitation of God through the Spirit," 2 Cor. vi. 16; also John xiv. 23, "Make our abode with Him;" not as an occasional visitant does our Saviour promise to come to us, but to abide and dwell within us. Let us pray the Apostle's prayer, "Abide with us."

Has grace wrought this great change in our hearts? See its necessity, Matt. xviii. 3; also John iii. 3, and 1 Cor. vi. 11.

LESSON III.—CHAPTER III.—THE LOVE AND GRACE WHICH HAD WROUGHT THAT CHANGE.

Ver. 1. Where, and for what was St. Paul a prisoner? "For you Gentiles," preaching amongst the Gentiles.

Ver. 2. The dispensation entrusted to him.

Ver. 3. The mystery. What was this "dispensation" and this "mystery?" The calling of the Gentiles. Verse 6, "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs," &c. The gradual unfolding of this truth. Ruth, the Moabitess, was a Gentile, yet, our Saviour was descended from her. The visit of the wise men to Bethlehem was the first manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. Cornelius was a Gentile, Acts x. 45. Paul and Barnabas were separated for this special work of preaching to the Gentiles, Acts xiii. 2.

Ver. 8. What was he to preach among the Gentiles? The unsearchable riches of Christ. Here is a mine of riches which we can never exhaust. The more we seek to know the riches of that love, the more we shall find still to search.

Ver. 15. "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." What constitutes a family? They are children of the same parents, united by the same feelings, sharing the same hopes. If one member suffer, the other members suffer with it. What should be the family feeling? Love, the bond which unites all. "The whole family in heaven and earth." Some still living the Christian life on earth, and some having entered the Christian rest above; yet but *one family*.

Verse 17. The Apostle's prayer that Christ might dwell in their hearts

The means by which He thus dwells; the hope he expresses for all, that they may be "rooted and grounded" in this love.

Ver. 18. "To comprehend with all saints the breadth, and length, and depth, and height." We are to measure that which is beyond all measurement. The *length* of that love; it was from everlasting. "I have loved you," &c. Jer. xxxi. 3. The *breadth* of that love, as shown in the forgiveness of our sins: "As far as the east is," &c., Ps. ciii. 12. The *depth* of that love which brought Christ down from heaven to save sinners. "O the depth," &c. Rom. xi. 33. The *height* of that love which raises us up from sin and death, and exalts us to everlasting life. "He ascended up far above," &c. Eph. iv. 9. The love of Christ to His people, "Having loved His own," &c. John xiii. 1; see also Deut. vii. 7, 8; and Is. lxiii. 9. The love shown to us now. "Herein is love," &c., 1 John iv. 10. The constraining power of that love, 2 Cor. v. 14.

Are we dwelling in that love? exploring that mine of unsearchable riches; seeking to know that love which passeth knowledge; to comprehend that immeasurable love which has no bounds?

LESSON IV.—Chapter iv. 1—24.

The Christian Calling or Profession.

We must look at this profession in its twofold character.

A profession, first, in matters of faith and doctrine; and

Secondly in point of character and practice.

For the present we will keep to the first of these: the Christian profession in matters of faith and doctrine.

Now, though the apostle could call these Christians at Ephesus saints and faithful, yet he thought it well to remind them in what their profession consisted.

Ver. 1. "Walk worthy of the vocation," &c. What is a vocation? What the vocation here spoken of? What is "walking worthy" of it?

No calling is so high, no profession so honourable as that of being a "Christian." To be a king is nothing to it, for all the earthly kingdoms will fade, but the Christian is heir of a heavenly kingdom. To be the child of the greatest and noblest on earth is nothing to it, for the Christian is a child of God; and so the Apostle says to them, this is your high calling, therefore walk worthy of it; this is what you believe, therefore follow it; this is your profession, therefore live up to it.

What is meant by walking worthy? See Rev. iii. 4. "They shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy." In what sense can any be thus counted worthy? Notice the expression *walk*, denoting our conduct and conversation amongst others, and the purity of life and character implied.

In what way thus to walk? ver. 2. "lowliness of mind." From whose example are these words taken? Matt. xi. 29, "learn of Me," &c.

Ver. 3, the unity of Christians, the one bond which should unite them all, see Col. iii. 14; "the bond," &c. "Pour into our hearts that most excellent gift."

Ver. 4. "One body." What is the body here spoken of? Who is the Head of this body? Who are its members? Rom. xii. 5, "As we have many," &c. Also 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. From "all kindreds, and nations, and people, and tongues," there are members of that body.

"One Spirit." See 1 Cor. xii. 4 and

11; also Rom. viii. 14. "As many as are led," &c.

"One hope." Contrast the hopes of earth with the Christian's hope. Some hope for honour and some for riches, some for health, and some for pleasure. These hopes may all fail, but Christians have all one hope, the "hope that maketh not ashamed." "In hope of eternal life."

Ver. 5. "One Lord," 1 Cor. viii. 6. "One Lord Jesus Christ by whom," &c. John xiii. 15, "Ye call me," &c. Matt. xxiii. 8, 10, "One is your," &c.

"One faith," Acts iv. 12. "Neither is there salvation in any other," &c., also Acts xvi. 31. "Believe on the Lord," &c. One baptism, Matt. xxviii. 19, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations," &c.; Gal. iii. 27, "As many of you," &c.

Ver. 6. "One God and Father of all," &c., Matt. xxiii. 9, "One is your Father," &c.; Mal. ii. 10, "Have we not all one Father?"

Ver. 11, 12, Speak of the various gifts bestowed upon the Church, to the end that all Christians may grow up into one body, ver. 16. Ver. 18, shows how those who were once dark, alienated, ignorant, blind, have now "learned Christ," ver. 20, and been taught "the truth in Jesus," ver. 21; have "been renewed," ver. 23, and put on "the new man," ver. 24.

This is our calling, our profession; members of one body, the Church; guided by one Spirit, the Holy Ghost; rejoicing in one hope, eternal life; obeying one Lord and Master, the Lord Jesus; professing one faith, faith in that only name whereby we may be saved; united by one baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; children of one Father, our Father which art in Heaven. Let us seek earnestly for that grace which alone can help us in lowliness and meekness, forbearance and love, to walk worthy of this high vocation.

LESSON V.—Ch. iv., 25—32: Ch. v., 1—21.—The Christian's Calling.

The Christian character described is twofold. It must be shown 1st. in the evil we are to avoid, and 2nd. in the good we are to do.

1st. The evil to be avoided. The first thing mentioned is "lying," ver. 25. It may seem strange that Christians should need to be warned against such a sin, but this verse enjoins upon us perfect sincerity, straightforward, fearless truthfulness in all our conduct, in all the little circumstances of daily life.

Ver. 26. Avoid all sinful anger; there is a just anger against sin. We read once, that Jesus looked round with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts; also He was much displeased when His disciples would have kept the little children from coming to Him. He knew when to be angry, and what was His anger? Sorrow and anger against sin, yet love and pity to sinners. Jonah's was a sinful anger when the gourd which had sheltered him withered away. God said, "Doest thou well to be angry?"

Verse 27. "Neither give place," &c. What is giving place? To each other Christians are always to give place, Rom. xii. 10, "in honour," &c.; also Phil. ii. 3, "in lowliness of mind let each esteem," &c.; and 1 Peter v. 5, "yea all of you be subject," &c. Only one respect in which they are never to give place, viz., to the devil.

Ver. 28. "Let him labour," &c.; "six days shalt thou labour," &c; it is our duty to work with our hands provided it is "the thing which is good;" all honest work is thus good; St. Peter and St. John were fishermen; St. Paul worked at tent-making, and so now, young woman in service, girls in the

actories, needlewomen in their work-room, should all labour diligently at their work, whatever it may be, "that they may have to give," &c.; we may always find some who need our help, and it is a far greater pleasure to give that which we have earned or worked for, than that which costs us nothing.

Verse 29. "Let no corrupt communication." What purity of life and conversation are here set before us! See chap. v. 4, "nor foolish talking." It does not mean that we are to be always *talking about* religion, but we are to be always *living* it.

Ver. 30. "Grieve not," &c. How do we grieve God's Holy Spirit? see 1 Thess. v. 19.

Verse 31. "Put away;" all and every sin to be put away. "I renounce the devil and *all* his works."

Chap. v. 11. "Have no fellowship," &c. Well may the works of darkness be called "unfruitful." There is nothing in the world so unprofitable as sin, and its "wages" are death, eternal death. "Rather reprove them;" reprove when possible, but *never* have any fellowship with them; reprove by our words if we have the opportunity, but *always* by our conduct. The unfruitful works of darkness tempt in many ways; girls in service or at work, meet with evil companions who will seek to lead them astray, who will tempt them to break the Sabbath, to neglect the house of God, to omit saying their prayers. That girl who in the midst of all this, "abstains from all appearance of evil," who never joins in any foolish or idle conversation, will be more really respected in the end, besides the happiness of having God's blessing on her.

II. The good to be done.

Chap. iv. 32. "To be kind, tender-hearted, forgiving," &c. What a perfect example is here set before us!

Chap. v. 2. "Walk in love, as Christ," &c. Again the same perfect pattern. He left us an example that we should follow His steps.

Verse 9. All goodness, righteousness, and truth.

Verse 15. "Circumspectly," all Christians need this lesson.

Verse 16. "Redeeming the time." How may we redeem it? rising early in the morning, treasuring up all our spare moments, seeking to use our time in God's service.

Verse 17. "Understanding what the will," &c. To what end? That we may both know and do His will. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Verse 19, 20. "Speaking to yourselves," &c. What a blessing to have our memories stored, and our hearts filled with good thoughts, passages from Scripture, and Psalms and Hymns, words that we may "speak to ourselves," in the midst of our work, or in seasons of sickness and loneliness; always for all things giving thanks.

How earnestly should we pray for grace that we may strive to walk worthy of this high calling! Notice the two names bestowed upon Christians, chap. v. 1, "Followers of God, as dear children;" verse 8, "children of light." What are the most advanced Christians at best, but children in their helplessness, their weakness, their need of a heavenly Father's love and care! Children of God, see Matt. v. 45; and children of light, see 1 Thess. v. 5.

On the coast of England there is a lighthouse with this inscription,—"To give light, and to save life." In what sense does a lighthouse save life? It warns of danger, and shows the way to safety. Christians are to be like that lighthouse, walking through a sinful world showing the pure light of a holy life. "Let your light," &c. "Ye are the light," &c. What a blessed thought that all these children of God, children of light, shall one day be gathered from their various homes on earth into their heavenly Father's bright and glorious home above, where all is light and love, and joy and peace, for ever!

Lesson VI.—Chapter v. 22 to Chapter vi. 9.

In our last two lessons we have considered the Christian profession, first in matters of faith, and secondly in point of character and practice; and having followed the Apostle's instructions with regard to what Christians are to be in themselves, we shall now see what Christians are required to do in the various relationships in which the providence of God has placed them. Rules are laid down for our guidance in every relation, each duty being enforced by the words,—"As unto the Lord."

Chap. v. 22. "Wives submit," &c. When was this first appointed? "Thy desire shall be to thy husband," &c., Gen. iii. 16—23. "As Christ is the head," &c., what a solemn motive for obedience in "everything," v. 24.

Verse 25. "Husbands love *as* Christ," &c. Happy those who are united, as the Apostle says, "*only* in the Lord;" when husband and wife are "heirs together of the grace of life," 1 Peter iii. 7, walking together "in the fear of the Lord," united in faith, and love and prayer. See how St. Paul enforces this by ever turning to the one subject, the love of Christ, His love to the Church. The way in which He showed that love, by giving Himself for it, and to what end, verse 26, 27. What a glorious purity that will be, when with no spot or stain of sin, no wrinkle of deformity, but holy and without blemish, the Church shall be presented clean and white, see Rev. xix. 8.

And it is from these motives that St. Paul urges all husbands to "love," and wives to "obey." Scripture has many such, as examples to us. "Even as Sarah obeyed," &c., 1 Peter iii. 6. Abigail, the wife of Nabal, whose "soft answer" turned away David's "wrath," when he would have destroyed her hard-hearted husband on account of his uncharitable behaviour. Always remember that a woman's best and greatest ornament will be the meek and quiet spirit, &c., 1 Peter iii. 5.

Chap. vi. 1—4. Next to the duties of husbands and wives, those of parents and children follow. "Children obey." Special judgments are pronounced on disobedient children, Prov. xx. 20, "Whoso curseth," &c. Also "The eye that mocketh at his father," &c. Prov. xxx. 17. Special blessings are promised to the obedient, as the first command with promise. See the blessing on well-trained children; Prov. xxii. 6, (margin, catechise) also 2 Tim. iii. 15; and the result of the training, Prov. xx. 11, "Even a child is known," &c. There have been many such children whose "pure work" has thus been blessed by God. Timothy was such a child, and Samuel and Joseph, all young and earnest in God's service.

Ver. 5—9. Duties of servants: verse 6 explains how all is to be done, "as servants of Christ doing the will of God *from the heart*;" the same motives enforced elsewhere, Col. iii. 22; 1 Tim. vi. 1; 1 Pet ii. 18. Such a servant was Deborah, the faithful nurse who lived with Jacob and Rebekah. Such was the little Israelitish maid who waited on Naaman's wife, such were the "saints in Cæsar's household;" who, surrounded by evil, could yet be earnest in God's work, and faithful servants of their earthly master.

Lesson VII.—Chapter vi. 10—24. The Christian's Armour.

Verses 10, 11, describe the nature of the warfare for which this armour is needed. Ver. 12, the enemies with which we have to contend, spiritual enemies, but strong and powerful, enemies we can only meet by spiritual armour, "the weapons of our warfare," &c., also Rom. xiii. 12. When were we enlisted to fight in

that warfare? see Baptism Service, "And do sign them with the sign of the cross, in token that," &c. Notice the enemies, "against sin, the world and the devil;" remember the prayer in the Litany, "From all the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil, Good Lord deliver us." How are we to fight against these enemies? "Manfully." In God's strength, not our own. What are we to put on? The *whole* armour,—we cannot do without any part of it. And to what end to stand and to withstand? Notice the double meaning, the one implying firm steadfastness on our part, the other, active resistance against evil.

Verse 14. First thing mentioned, the girdle, see the use of a girdle, and the nature of the girdle here spoken of, Is. lxi. 5; Luke xii. 35; 1 Pet. i. 13. The breastplate, Is. lix. 17.

Verse 15. "Our feet shod." What is the meaning of the expression? See Prov. i. 15, 16, "Refrain thy foot," &c.; also Ps. cxix. 105, "Thy word is a lamp," &c.; also Is. lii. 7, "How beautiful are the feet," &c. The words seem to denote our conduct and conversation with others, our walk and movements in the world; and what are these to be? love and peace.

Verse 16. "The shield of faith;" nature and use of a shield, a defence to the person who uses it, and it throws back the dart of the enemy; unbelief, distrust of God's love and goodness, are darts which the enemy of souls will aim at us; faith is the shield to throw them back, 1 John v. 4, "This is the victory," &c.

Ver. 17.—"Helmet of salvation." What is the use of a helmet? David said, "Thou hast covered my *head* in the day of battle," denoting God's protection in preserving him from danger; see 1 Thess. v. 8, "and for an helmet," &c.; also Isaiah lix. 17, "an helmet," &c. This glorious hope, this "blessed hope," is to be the Christian's helmet. "The sword of the Spirit," &c., see Heb. iv. 12, "for the word of God," &c. How can God's word be like a sword in our hands? Thus David met temptation. "Thy word have I hid," &c. Thus Jesus met temptation. "It is written," &c.

Ver. 18.—Praying and watching; "praying always" cannot mean that we are to be always in the attitude, or even the act of prayer. But we may live in a spirit of prayer, lifting up our hearts to God for strength whenever we feel that we need His help. We may sanctify our daily life and work with prayer. The servant may begin each day with prayer that God would bless her in her daily work, and make her faithful to her duties, and so in every relation of life. "All supplication for all saints." Even the Apostle asked his friends to pray for him, and especially ought we to pray for our pastors and teachers, for our friends, relatives, and for all.

The other word, "watching." How useless would be the best armour a soldier could possess if he was sleeping at his post! Let us strive, by God's grace, to keep our armour always bright, always ready for use, to be always watching against our spiritual enemies.

And see the blessed end of this warfare. "Fight the good fight," &c., 1 Tim. vi. 12; also "I have fought," &c., 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, "the crown of righteousness."

How great an honour it was thought when the brave soldiers, who had returned from the Crimean War, received their medals from the Queen's own hands; yet what is this compared with the Christian's receiving, from the Captain of his salvation, the crown of glory which can never fade away!

LESSON VIII.—General Questions on the Epistle.

What more do we know about the Church in Ephesus?

Who was the first Bishop? See end of 2 Tim. At what date does St. Paul write to Ephesus again, and what messages does he send? 2 Tim. iv. 19. His old friends mentioned with affection again; 2 Tim. i. 16—18. From this we gather that Onesiphorus was probably a rich man, as his "household" is spoken of, perhaps a merchant, as he visited Rome; but at any rate not ashamed to visit a prisoner, willing, whatsoever danger he might encounter by so doing, to seek "diligently" till he had found the prison in which St. Paul was a "chained" captive.

As far as we know this 2nd Epistle to Timothy was the last letter St. Paul ever wrote, and he was then looking forward with joy and hope, to the crown of glory that awaited him.

What more is there in the New Testament respecting the Church in Ephesus? See Rev. ii. 1—7.

Thirty years had passed since St. Paul sent his last letter to the Bishop of Ephesus. What changes had taken place since? Long time had St. Paul received the crown of martyrdom, to which he was looking forward, and Timothy the first Bishop, was resting in his grave at Ephesus, when this message was sent. To whom was it given? Where was St. John now? It is supposed that for some years St. John lived at Ephesus, and took care of Mary the mother of Jesus. Now he was in banishment in the Isle of Patmos. Who sent this message? Rev. i. 13, 17, 18. The Lord Jesus Christ.

"The candlesticks." Rev. ii. 1. Why is the Church compared to a candlestick? Holding forth the light. Why to a *golden* candlestick? See its purity, its preciousness. What is the message itself? It begins with "I know." See how Jesus notices everything done by those who bear His name, even to a cup of cold water. See the things commended, works, labour, patience, hatred of evil, avoidance of also doctrine, and all errors, patient perseverance. All these are mentioned first in this message, all showing His love.

Then follows the reproof, v. 4, 5. They had left their "first love." How had that first love been manifested? see Acts xix. 19, their willingness to give all for Christ. How much like ourselves! When we begin any great undertaking, how it fills our thoughts, how earnest we are about it, how often we allow our zeal to grow cold!

"Thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes;" verse 6. We are not told what sect these were, perhaps they were those who would induce Christians to join in heathen feasts and sacrifices. Notice the expression "which thing I hate." All sin is hateful in the sight of God, and should be "hated" by Christians.

What is Ephesus now? The magnificent heathen temple which was there when St. Paul first visited it, has long since crumbled to the dust. The flourishing Christian Church which was planted there has ceased to exist, and travellers tell us that scarcely any ruins even of the town itself remain. The candlestick has been altogether removed. What a warning to Christians now! Yet see the promise with which the message ends, ver. 7. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life," &c.

Let us take this blessed promise to ourselves, and let us pray earnestly that our faith in Him may never become dim, our love to Him never grow cold, our zeal for His service never slacken; then shall our path be like the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day; then may we be amongst those to whom the promise was made that they shall eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. J. B.

NOTES ON

THE SERIES OF FIFTY-TWO LESSONS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, EMBRACING THE CHIEF TOPICS OF THE BIBLE.

LESSON XV.—A SAVIOUR, JOHN I. TO VERSE 34.

THE love of God to sinners, which was the subject of our last lesson, led Him to devise a way of saving them from the consequences of the Fall. Had He pardoned them at once, He would have failed to perform His threat to Adam. But God's threatenings, like His promises, must be kept, for He is the God of truth, Num. xxiii. 19; 1 Sam. xv. 29. All His attributes are infinite; His mercy could not be manifested so as to encroach on the province of His justice. The truth of God's word, and the justice of His nature, had both to be satisfied before man could be pardoned. A fulfilment of the threat on some substitute,—a satisfaction of offended justice by some voluntary victim,—was the only way of saving man. No created being could be this victim. The angels themselves were but the servants of the Lord of Hosts, at His disposal, not their own; owing Him, on their own account, all the obedience they could ever render.

But a way *was* found. God Himself, in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, became the offering, 1 John iii. 16. He who had been from eternity with God (verses 1, 2; chap. viii. 58; xvii. 5), by whom the worlds were made (Col. i. 16; Heb. i. 2), came to earth, lived the life of hardship, and died the death of shame to which we were sentenced (2 Cor. v. 21), that in Him the curse of Adam might be borne (Gal. iii. 13), the broken law to which justice pointed might be fulfilled (Rom. v. 19; vi. 14), and justice herself enlisted in the cause of man's salvation (Rom. iii. 20; viii. 33). In Him, then, the way to eternal life is re-opened (John xiv. 6), the fiery sword which guarded it removed (John x. 28; Rom. v. 21; vi. 23; 2 Tim. i. 10). And thus it was that, in announcing "a Saviour's" birth, the angels were announcing "peace" between earth and heaven, "good-will" from God to man (Matt. i. 21; Luke ii. 14.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verses 1—2 declare Christ's glory from eternity; verses 3—5, His glory in time; and this is exhibited in the work of creation (verse 3), and of redemption, verses 4, 5.

Verses 4, 5.—The life, spiritual and everlasting, brought into the world by Christ, may well be compared to rays of light piercing the thick gloom produced by the Fall. Man's blindness is the only reason why that light ever shines in vain, verse 5.

Verse 7.—For instances of the witness John bare to Christ, see verses 15, 27, 29.

Verse 9.—*Every man.* Christ's light was to shine for Gentiles as well as Jews. All need a Saviour, and to all He came.

Verses 10, 11.—A sad proof of man's darkness; Christ came, and was rejected, not only by the world He had made, but by the people He had chosen.

Verses 12, 13.—*As many.* Adoption was henceforth to be the *power*, or *right*, or *privilege* (marg.) not of the Jewish people exclusively, but of *all* who should believe on Christ. Observe, too, that God Himself effects this change. We cannot convert ourselves, John xv. 16; Ephes. ii. 8.

Verse 14.—Christ's Divine and human nature are clearly shown and described in this verse.

Verse 15.—*Cometh after me*; in order of human birth. *Was before me*; by eternal existence.

Verse 16.—*Grace for* (or *upon*) *grace*; abundance of grace.

Verse 17.—The law was indeed given by Moses, but its types were fulfilled, and grace to obey its precepts bestowed by Christ.

Verse 18.—*Declared Him.* No previous dispensation revealed so fully and clearly the nature and purposes of God as that of His Son, 1 John ii. 22, 23.

Verse 21.—*Elias* or Elijah. In the literal sense which they intended John was not Elias. *That prophet*, perhaps referring to the *great* prophet, predicted in Deut. xviii. 15, 18.

Verses 24, 25.—The Pharisees were very tenacious of rites and ceremonies. Baptism had only been used when receiving proselytes from heathenism.

Verse 29.—*The Lamb of God.* See the points of resemblance between Christ and the Paschal Lamb, Ex. xii.; Isa. liii. 7; 1 Peter i. 19; Rev. xiii. 8.

Verses 33, 34.—This was the testimony, not only of John, but of God Himself, to Christ's Divine mission, Matt. iii. 17.

APPLICATION.—God has given us the *only* Saviour. *All* need His salvation. Do we know Him as *our* Saviour?

LESSON XVI.—THE LOVE OF CHRIST, JOHN X. 1—28.

The path to heaven, closed by Adam's sin and our transgressions, could never have been re-opened, had not Christ suffered the penalty due to our guilt, and thus, by the sacrifice of Himself, opened up a new and living way, by which fallen man might yet be justified, Heb. x. 19, 20. It was the great love which Christ bore to sinners, which led Him to devise the method by which God could be just, not passing over transgression, and yet the justifier of them who believe, Eph. v. 2. It was this love which led Him to leave His Father's throne, and come to live on earth in low estate, despised and rejected of men, and which caused Him to endure the bitter pain of a cruel death, and the still more bitter agony of His Father's wrath. Sinful man in no way deserved such an amazing exhibition of love. Enemies through wicked works, we could only look for wrath and punishment, and hence the greatness of the Saviour's love. He died voluntarily out of pure pity for mankind. His love was free and undeserved, Rom. v. 7, 8; and having its beginning before the foundation of the world (Eph. i. 4; 1 Pet. i. 19, 20; Rev. xiii. 8), it shall endure even unto the end, John xiii. 1; 1. Cor. i. 8. Christ's love is perfect (John xv. 13), and passes our knowledge, Eph. iii. 19. It is still as great as it ever was. Time and place make no change with Him. We all may be saved through it, for such is His gracious will, John xvii. 24. Christ is more ready to hear than we to pray. He waits to be gracious. His love led Him to die for all, 1 Tim. ii. 6; Heb. ii. 9; 1 John ii. 2; iii. 16, 17. All therefore may be saved.

The discourse of our Lord, recorded in our lesson, is a continuation of that in chapter ix. The Pharisees contended that they were the pastors of the Church, and that Jesus ought to have obtained authority from them, Matt. xxi. 23. Our Lord, therefore, here describes who were the false shepherds, and who the true, showing that from Himself all who exercise the pastoral office must derive their authority. To them the "porter openeth;" *i.e.*, God, by His Providence and

His Spirit, makes way for them to exercise their ministry, and they "go before" their flock, teaching them by their example (1 Peter v. 3), and the people follow them with confidence, as they know and experience that their doctrine is good. There is no entrance into the *true* Church of Christ, either for the shepherds, *i.e.*, ministers and teachers, or for the sheep (verse 7), *i.e.*, the people amongst whom they minister, but by faith in Him, and by embracing His doctrine.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 3.—*By name;* in eastern countries the shepherd not only knows every sheep, (for that they do in this country), but has a distinctive name for each, to which it answers when called, just as with dogs amongst ourselves.

Verse 4.—Another peculiarity must here be noticed. In the east the shepherds do not follow the sheep, driving them before them, as we see them do in England, but they walk first and the sheep follow.

Verse 8.—*All that ever came before me*; not the prophets who came by His authority, but all that came under pretence of being the Messiah, as Theudas, Acts v. 36, or who were unfaithful shepherds, Jer. xxiii. 1.

Verse 12.—*An hireling*, one that works for hire or wages, meaning here an intruder who seeks not the good of the flock, but his own profit. Beasts of prey were common in Judæa, and none but those who owned the sheep would encounter them to save the flock.

Verse 14.—*Know*, or love, 1 Cor. viii. 3. *Am known*, or am beloved.

Verse 16.—*Other sheep;* this passage refers to the calling of the Gentiles.

Verse 22.—*The feast of the dedication* was instituted by Judas Maccabæus, B.C. 164, in imitation of those by Solomon and Ezra, as a grateful memorial of the cleansing of the second temple and altar, after they had been profaned by Antiochus Epiphanes. It lasted eight days, and took place in the month corresponding with our December.

Verse 23.—*Solomon's porch*; the porch rebuilt on the place where Solomon's formerly stood.

Verse 24.—*Make us to doubt*; in the Greek, hold us in suspense.

APPLICATION.—Does the good Shepherd's love to us excite love to Him in our own hearts? And do we listen to His voice, and follow His guidance in all things?

LESSON XVII.—THE CONDESCENSION OF CHRIST, JOHN XIII. 1—30.

We shall never obtain anything like an idea of Christ's condescension till we get to heaven, and see what His glory is. For what it is now, that it was before the foundation of the world. He was the "image of God," 2 Cor. iv. 4; John xvii. 5; Col. i. 15; the brightness of His glory, John i. 14; Heb. i. 3; His equal from eternity, John i. 1, 2; the Sovereign of all created beings, Heb. i. 6, 8, 13. The ruin of our world, or of ten thousand such worlds, would have made no difference to the stability of His throne. He was to reign for ever and ever. Yet all this glory was laid aside for our sakes, 2 Cor. viii. 9. The steps of His abasement are beautifully traced in Phil. ii. 5—8. "He made Himself of no reputation," gave up all His Divine honours and royal state, Matt. xxvi. 53. More than this,—He "took upon Him the form of a servant"—not that of angels, God's noblest servants, but of men, His weakest and least worthy servants, Heb.

ii. 9, 10, 14—16. Even from this point He humbled Himself again, for He was born a poor and helpless babe, Ps. xxii. 6; Is. xl. 3; Matt. viii. 20. And yet death itself was not humiliation enough for Christ to endure for us; it was "even the death of the cross," the most terrible and shameful death of all, Ps. xxii. 14; Gal. iii. 13. All to this all the insults to which He submitted from the creatures of His hand (Matt. xi. 19—13; xxvii. 29, 30; compare John i. 3), and worst of all, the deadly assaults He underwent on earth from Satan, once cast out a defeated rebel from His presence in heaven. Surely, when we see such "lowliness" (Matt. xi. 29; xii. 13, 14, on the part of the "Mighty God" (Is. ix. 6), we must feel that "pride was not made for man."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 3.—Christ's divinity and glory are expressly mentioned here to display more forcibly the condescension of the act He was about to perform.

Verse 4.—*His garments*; properly His upper garment. *Girded Himself*; bound His other garments round Him as servants did. The office of washing the feet was usually performed by servants.

Verse 8.—This action was typical of that washing by Christ's blood and Spirit, without which there can be no sanctification, and therefore no "part with Him," there or hereafter, 1 Cor. vi. 11; Titus iii. 5, 6.

Verse 9.—*Not my feet only.* Peter's humility at first made him resist such a condescension on the part of his beloved Master, but when told it was a test of his attachment to Him, he wished to be wholly cleansed.

Verse 14.—*Wash one another's feet*, signifying that we should be ready to perform the lowliest offices for one another without sense of degradation.

Verse 18.—The fact of the traitor Judas being amongst the Apostles on this occasion, makes our Lord's condescension especially touching.

Verse 23.—*Leaning*: the Jews were accustomed to recline on couches ranged along the side of the table. The disciple referred to was John.

Verse 27.—Privileges, if they do not soften, generally harden the heart, as they did in the case of Judas.

Verse 28.—Observe how unsuspicious the Apostles were, even after the warning of Judas' intentions, and how well, therefore, he must have acted the hypocrite.

Verse 29.—Offerings were usual at the time of the Jewish feasts.

APPLICATION.—The humility and condescension of Christ are here strikingly shown to us. They are given for our example (v. 14). Do we, in the same spirit, by "love serve one another?"

LESSON XVIII.—THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.—ISAIAH LIII.

Christ's sufferings for us began with His birth, and increased in bitterness till He "laid down His life for the sheep." No human mind can conceive how great they were to One who bore them that He might remove the penalty of eternal misery from a guilty and fallen world. He was the true scape-goat (Lev. xvi. 21), suffering for the sins of others, not His own.

Let us try to recall the various kinds of suffering the blessed Saviour endured for us. They were bodily and mental. In His body He was circumcised, at eight days old, that no tittle of the law might be unfulfilled, Luke ii. 21. He suffered hunger, Matt. iv. 2; thirst, John xix. 28; fatigue, John iv. 6; home-

lessness, Matt. viii. 20; scourging, Matt. xxvii. 26; piercing of His hands, feet, (Luke xxiv. 40), and head, John xix. 2; and finally a death of lingering agony, Mark xv. 25, 34. The kind of death was one of the most terrible that human cruelty has devised; the body hanging upon the cross with all its weight from the torn hands and feet. The crucified one usually died by slow degrees of pain and exhaustion.

But while His bodily sufferings were great, they were far surpassed by His mental sufferings:—these are to be ascribed to many causes, as the assaults of Satan, Matt. iv. 1; continual contact with evil men, Matt. xvii. 17; His intense sympathy with the sorrowful, Mark vii. 34; John xi. 35; His yearning over the lost, Luke xix. 41, 42; the contradiction of enemies, Matt. ix. 11, 12; their mockery and contempt of His sufferings, Matt. xxvii. 29, 39—44, 49; the doubt and unbelief of His relatives (John vii. 5) and nation, John i. 11; the misunderstanding and slowness of the chosen twelve, John xiv. 9; their want of sympathy in His hour of need, Matt. xxvi. 40, and of courage to follow Him to the last, Matt. xxvi. 56; the treachery of Judas, John xiii. 21; his human dread of Calvary, Matt. xxvi. 38, 39; and His sense of separation from His Father, Matt. xxvii. 46.

Nor ought we ever to forget the purpose of all those unutterable sufferings—for the fearful weight of a world's iniquity was borne by Jesus, as it had been foretold by the prophets (Is. liii. 6; lxiii. 3). Throughout eternity His people will remember the price paid for their redemption; see Rev. v. 9.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 1.—Christ's miracles were manifest to all, but few acknowledged "the arm of the Lord" in them, Matt. xii. 24.

Verse 2.—Christ's appearance in humble life, contrary to the expectations of the Jews, is here meant.

Verse 3.—This description of our Saviour's life on earth well agrees with the above summary. *We hid*, etc., out of aversion or contempt. The marginal reading is, "*He* hid as it were His face from us," alluding to the custom of mourners, 2 Sam. xv. 30.

Verse 4—6.—Here is clearly stated the purpose of all this suffering. It was "for us men and for our salvation," 1 Pet. ii. 24; Heb. ix. 28. *The chastisement of our peace, i.e.*, by which our peace was effected. *Laid on Him*, referring to the custom of laying hands on the head of the victim in making atonement, Lev. xvi. 21, 22. Though the Jews would fain have believed that Jesus suffered for His own sin, yet it was *our* grief and sorrow He bore.

Verse 7.—The perfect resignation, meekness and gentleness of our Lord under His suffering are beautifully figured by the patience of the lamb.

Verse 8.—Christ was not actually in prison, but the marginal reading, "He was taken from *distress* (or oppression) and judgment," was literally fulfilled. *Who shall declare His generation?* or "His manner of life who shall declare?" alluding to a custom among the Romans of making proclamation, that any who knew the accused, should bear witness as to his character.

Verse 9.—This was fulfilled when our Saviour was crucified with the thieves and buried in the grave of Joseph of Arimathea, Matt. xxvii. 57—60.

Verse 10, 11.—Christ's bitter sorrows were to be succeeded by triumph, satisfaction, and rest, in beholding the fruits of his labours in the redemption of His seed, Heb. ii. 9.; x. 12. 13.

Verse 12.—A prophecy of the glories of Christ's mediatorial throne. See also Ps. ii. and lxxxix.

APPLICATION.—The Saviour underwent so much suffering to pay the penalty of our sin. Are we willing to suffer rather than to sin?

LESSON XIX.—The Death of Christ.—Luke XXIII. 33—56.

We read in this passage of the most awful event which the world ever saw,—Christ the Creator dying for sinful creatures, and that death aggravated by all the ignominy and suffering which the wicked passions of men could devise, and the malignity of Satan prompt. Death was denounced as the punishment of sin; man by sinning rendered himself liable to the penalty. God's justice demanded that sin should be punished. Infinite love led Christ to bear our sins, with all their awful consequences; and here we read of the sacrifice by which God's justice, truth, and holiness were satisfied, whilst a way was opened by which guilty man could escape the consequences of his transgression.

The sufferings of Christ were aggravated (1) by the agents who put Him to death—the creatures of His hand; nay more, the nation whom God had chosen as his peculiar people. John xi. 47, 48; xii. 19; Matt. xxi. 45—46.

(2) By the ignominious and shameful mode of execution—crucifying being only used for great criminals and slaves.

(3) By the company in which He suffered—two thieves.

(4) By the scoffs and taunts of those for whom He was dying; but His chiefest agony was caused by the sense of God's wrath against Him as our surety. His bodily sufferings were as nothing when compared with His mental anguish; see Matt. xxvii. 46.

The greatness of Christ's love was further displayed by the fact, that His death was voluntary. He *laid* down His life; John x. 18. He *gave* Himself for us, Eph. v. 2. By the death of Christ, a full atonement was made for the sins of all who seek, in His own appointed way, the benefits of His cross and passion. Thus *His* death is life to us. Rom. v. 10, 11; 1 Cor. xv. 13, 22; Eph. ii. 13.

In the midst of His sufferings, our Lord's thoughts were still of mercy towards those who so despitefully treated Him, verses 34, 43. The beautiful incident in verses 40—43 is not recorded by the other evangelists. Christ's own sufferings did not prevent Him feeling for others. None who come to Christ will be cast out. The like repentance and faith will ensure a like gracious reception; but let none presume to go on in sin trusting to a death-bed repentance, for it may *never* be theirs.

Explanatory Notes.—Verse 33.—*Malefactors*, criminals; men who had broken the laws of the country.

Verse 34.—Thus were fulfilled the prophecies in Is. liii. 12, and Ps. xxii. 18.

Verse 35.—*Derided*, scoffed at, ridiculed; see Ps. xxii. 7, 8.

Verse 36.—It was customary to give criminals about to suffer this dreadful death, some potion to benumb their feelings, such as that mentioned, Mark xv. 23; but this vinegar and gall (Matt. xxvii. 34) was offered to aggravate Christ's sufferings; see Ps. lxix. 21.

Verse 38.—*Superscription*; writing placed over the head of the criminal, stating his name and the crime he suffered for.

Verse 43.—*Paradise*; the state of joy and happiness for the spirits of the just after death.

Verse 44.—This darkness could not be caused by an eclipse, as it was then the Feast of the Passover, which was always about the time of full moon, when an eclipse of the sun is impossible. *Sixth hour*, twelve o'clock; *ninth hour*, three o'clock in the afternoon.

Verse 45.—The rending of the vail of the temple signified that the distinction between Jew and Gentile was done away; all might now have access to God through one Mediator, Christ, Eph. ii. 14—16.

Verse 46.—Thus was accomplished the great redemption foretold by the prophets, Gen. iii. 15; Dan. ix. 26; Zech. xiii. 7. That Christ did not die from exhaustion, is shown by His crying "with a loud voice," immediately before He *gave* up the ghost; the two thieves were still alive, see John xix. 32, 33.

Verse 53.—*Sepulchre*, tomb; *hewn in stone*, it was the custom among the Jews to make their sepulchres in rocks. See Isa. liii. 9.

APPLICATION.—Christ died for us that we might live in and to Him. In death as in life, we may and shall follow the footsteps of our Lord.

LESSON XX.—THE RESURRECTION, MATT. XXVII. 62—66, AND XXVIII.

The fact of the resurrection of our Saviour is the turning-point in the scheme of salvation. It is like the key-stone which secures the arch. Christ by His resurrection showed Himself to be the Son of God, and proved the sufficiency of His atoning sacrifice and its acceptance by the Father. The powers of death and hell seemed indeed to have conquered when the Lord of Life expired on the cross; but now He burst the gates of death asunder, led death and him that had the power of death captive, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Christ died for our sins, and rose for our justification, Rom. iv. 25. By His atoning sacrifice He bore the punishment due to man's transgression; by His glorious resurrection God testified His acceptance of that atonement and sacrifice, Acts ii. 24; iii. 15; Eph. i. 20.

The weight of evidence is proportionable to the importance of the matter proved. The conduct of Christ's enemies served more fully to establish the fact. The wanton cruelty of a Roman soldier prevented any doubts as to His being actually dead, John xix. 34. The watch, the stone, the seal, and the absurd story to account for the fact they could not deny, to which the Jews were driven, attest the impossibility of collusion, and furnish unwilling witnesses to the truth of the Evangelists' account. Thus God overruled the counsels of wicked men for His own ends and to their confusion.

Christ's resurrection had been foretold (Ps. xvi. 10), and the Jews themselves quoted His own prophetic declarations (Matt. xii. 40; xvi. 21; xvii. 23; xx. 19; Mark xiv. 28; John ii. 19) as the reason for the course they took. The disciples' faith had failed when they saw His violent death, but it was not destroyed. They were neither deceived nor deceivers when their hope was revived by the resurrection of their Master. They knew that Pharisees had sealed the tomb, and Roman soldiers guarded it; they knew, too, the person of the Lord, and instantly recognised Him, except when He chose to veil Himself from them; they spoke to Him and touched His risen body, and He ate before them. Thus their own doubts and distrust were removed, and faith, confidence, and joy, were their happy portion. For the resurrection proved Jesus to be the Son of God, that His sacrifice had satisfied Divine justice, and that man should rise through Him, John xiv. 3, 19; 1 Cor. xv. 20, 21.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Chap. xxvii., verse 62.—*The next day*; the evening of the crucifixion, after sunset, when the *next* day, the Jewish Sabbath, had commenced. The Pharisees who had found fault with our Saviour for His works of mercy on that day (Matt. xii. 10—14; Luke xiv. 3), were themselves busied, upon the Sabbath, in a work of the greatest malice. *The day of the preparation* was

the first day of the Passover, when all things were got in readiness for the observance of the Paschal week.

Verse 64.—*The third day*, not three *whole* days; Christ died at three o'clock on Friday, and was buried on that day. He lay in the tomb, therefore, part of Friday, the whole of Saturday, and part of Sunday. The Jewish day began at six o'clock in the evening.

Verse 65.—*Ye have a watch*; the Jews had a body of Roman soldiers at their command, whose duty it was to guard the temple. The number of soldiers employed to guard or "watch" the tomb is supposed to have been sixty. *Sealing the stone*; perhaps with Pilate's seal of office, see Dan. vi. 17.

Chap. xxviii., verse 1.—*In the end*, or "after the Sabbath was ended." Observe the sacredness of the Sabbath, which these devout women would not break, even on so holy an errand. See Mark xvi. 1.

Verse 2—4.—*Was a great earthquake, i.e.*, had been such a concussion of the earth, when the Lord arose, as to remove the stone. The Evangelist is recording what had happened at the Saviour's resurrection, before the women came to the sepulchre, as well as what they saw.

Verses 5—10.—To follow the narrative of the resurrection, all the accounts must be taken together. Two parties of women came to the tomb, one to find it empty, and see the angels, the other to meet on the way the Lord Himself, see Mark xvi. 9. The same day Christ appeared to the disciples at Emmaus, Luke xxiv., and the same evening to the whole company (except Thomas), John xx. So that before the day had passed the evidence was complete.

Verses 11—15.—It is important to bear in mind that this is the only story told by the enemies of our Lord, to account for His body not being in the tomb. Its absurdity is most apparent. If the soldiers were awake, why did they not prevent the disciples stealing the body; if asleep, how could they tell what occurred? How improbable that the unarmed and frightened disciples should attempt to open the sepulchre guarded by the soldiers! How unlikely that all the guard should be asleep upon their posts, when the penalty for such negligence in the Roman army was death!

Verse 16.—This meeting is supposed to have taken place near Capernaum, on the mountain on which Christ delivered His famous sermon (Matt. v.); and to be the occasion spoken of by the Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 16; see also Matt. xxvi. 32.

Application.—"As Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," Rom. vi. 4.

LESSON XXI.—The Ascension of Christ.—Acts I. 1—12.

Christ's triumph over his enemies, both of earth and hell, was to be even more completely demonstrated than it had yet been, by His Ascension into heaven; see Ps. xxiv; lxviii. 18. But this glorious termination of His course was delayed awhile, that He might prepare His Apostles for their future course of labour, and also that He might be more fully recognised as their risen Lord by all the disciples. They had several opportunities for these things during the forty days He remained on earth, (Matt. xxviii. 9; Mark xvi. 12, 13; John xx. 18, 19, 26; and xxi. 1, etc.; 1 Cor. xv. 5—7), though He did not pass *all* His time with them after His death and resurrection, as He had done before.

The disciples seem to have been all together at the ascension, Matt. xxviii. 16. This was for the confirmation of their faith. They had all believed, now they were to see, that Christ was indeed the Son of God. Christ ascended from Bethany, close to the Mount of Olives, the scene of his bitterest sorrows. He "went not up to joy, but first He suffered pain." And when He bids His people bear the cross, that they may wear the crown (Rev. ii. 10), He is but asking them to tread the path He trod Himself, Matt. xvi. 24; Rom. viii. 17. After His ascension, our Lord took His place for ever at the right hand of God, Mark xvi. 19. He *sat*—a posture denoting not only rest, but sovereignty. He had put all enemies under His feet, Eph. i. 20—22.

Christ did not forget His people in His own triumph. His last earthly act was to bless them, Luke xxiv. 51, and His object was to prepare a place for them in His own home, John xiv. 2, 3. His continual occupation in heaven is to intercede for them, Acts vii. 56; Rom. viii. 34. He lives to plead for those for whom He died. Their sins, cares, troubles, are all known to Him, and *His* intercession *cannot* fail. If then our blessed Saviour in His heavenly glory still remembers us, let us strive in our earthly callings to remember Him; so that while we wait His pleasure to "exalt these vile *bodies* to that place where He is gone before," we may (as we pray in our Collect), "daily in *heart* and *mind* thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 1.—*The former treatise;* the Gospel according to St. Luke, who is the author of this book. (See Luke i. 1—4.)

Verse 3.—*Infallible*, undoubted. *Things pertaining*, etc.; some of these are mentioned in Matt. xxviii. 18—20; Mark xvi. 16—19; John xx. 21—23; xxi.; but many, probably, are not recorded.

Verse 4.—*Promise*; the special gifts of the Spirit. See John xiv. 16, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7—13.

Verse 6.—We shall not wonder at the Apostles' slowness in learning that Christ's kingdom was not of this world, if we observe our own hearts, and their propensity to dwell on temporal rather than spiritual things.

Verse 7.—Christ would not tell them *when* He would restore the kingdom to Israel, Matt. xxiv. 3, 36. God fulfils prophecy in His own way and time: the uncertainty is to keep us watchful.

Verse 8.—*Witnesses*—to give evidence of all they heard, and so to help in the establishment of Messiah's kingdom.

Verse 9.—Christ rose *above* the clouds, which hid Him from their view.

Verse 10.—*Two men*—angels in human form, perhaps the same as those referred to in John xx. 12.; Luke xxiv. 4.

Verse 11.—*Why stand ye gazing?* Is it in idleness? Then remember, your Master will come again to take account of his servants. Is it in sorrow? Then be cheered: He whom you lose now, will appear a second time to your complete salvation, John xiv. 3.

Verse 12.—A Sabbath-day's journey was 2000 cubits—about a mile, Luke xxiv. 50. Bethany was the continuation of the Mount of Olives.

APPLICATION.—Seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

LESSON XXII.—REPENTANCE.—LUKE XV. 11—24.

The three parables contained in this chapter were spoken in answer to the murmurs of the Pharisees. They complained of the attention that Jesus paid to those who had been outwardly wicked; but He reminded them that as a lost sheep, or a piece of money that was mislaid, would be carefully looked after, or a son who had foolishly left his home would be welcomed on his return by his fond father, so God cares for poor lost wanderers, and is ready gladly to receive them when they turn to him in true repentance. In His divine and tender compassion Christ sought out the most guilty and fallen, pitying the sinner, while He abhorred the sin. The story of the wandering, and the recovery of the prodigal son, is so natural, and the lesson to be drawn from it so evident, that even the Pharisees could not but admire the forgiving love of the father, and upon the same ground ought to have recognised the love of Jesus in receiving penitent sinners.

The younger son (verse 12) represents a man in his unconverted state. He was impatient to receive his portion; he was unwilling to be under his father's control and had no desire to be with him, but wanted to go his own way; he wasted all that was given him in sensual gratification, and felt no real satisfaction with it all; but no sooner was it gone than he was left in want and wretchedness. How exactly does this answer to the character of the natural man! He too, wants to have his portion immediately, (Ps. xvii. 14;) he will not submit to God's direction, but wishes to be his own master, (Rom. viii. 7); instead of loving, he dislikes God, and though he cannot get away from His presence, yet he does as much towards it as possible by forgetting Him altogether, (Ps. x. 4; xiv. 1). He wastes his time, his health, his religious privileges, and every other blessing which God gives him, using none of them to any right purpose, (Rom. iii. 12), and after all, he remains unsatisfied and unhappy; still following the world, though finding that it can yield him no real enjoyment.

Trouble and humiliation followed. The young man joined himself to a citizen of the far country, who employed him in the degrading occupation of feeding swine, while he continued to be unpitied and unfed. Here, however, a change takes place: he "comes to himself" and sees things as they really are; becomes conscious of the sin and folly of his past course, and determines to go back, and humble himself before his father; and he does this directly, confessing his guilt in the most humiliating terms. In this we have set before us the nature of true repentance: it implies a consciousness of sin; sorrow and self-abasement on account of it; confession of guilt; and a forsaking of all sin. Isa. i. 16; lviii. 3—7; Ezek. xxxiii. 11. The way in which he was received by his father, presents us also with an affecting view of the readiness of God to pardon every true penitent, Acts v. 31. He saw him while yet at a distance, as he began to return; moved with compassion he ran to greet him, though the son may be supposed to be coming slowly, half ashamed and half afraid. He did not tell him to wash himself first, and put on better clothes, but fell on his neck just as he was, and gave him the kiss of love, and the warm welcome of a father. The various particulars afterwards mentioned seem also meant to represent spiritual blessings: the best robe would signify the Saviour's righteousness; the ring on which the family arms would be engraved, would signify the privilege of adoption; the shoes for his feet, the power to walk in the ways of God; the fatted calf, food and nourishment for the soul; and the joy and gladness manifested, answer to the chief lesson of the former parables, that "there is joy in the presence of the angels of

God, over one sinner that repenteth." Thus are we encouraged to seek God's pardon; for many are the promises to the penitent—see Deut. iv. 30, 31; Isa. i. 18—19; lv. 6. 7.; Jer. xxxvi. 3; Ezek. xviii. 21; Acts iii. 19.: and the warnings against delay, Prov. i. 24—28; Jer. xiv. 10.—12.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 12.—*That falleth to me*, his share of the estate when he was of age.

Verse 14.—*Wasted his substance*, spent his property extravagantly, and in bad company.

Verse 15.—*Joined himself*, entered into the service of. To *feed swine*, would be a peculiarly degrading task to a Jew, as, besides the natural filthiness of the animal, the swine was ceremonially unclean, Lev. xi. 7.

Verse 17.—*He came to himself;* he was acting so foolishly before, that he hardly seemed to be in his right senses. Is not this the case with every unconverted man, who wilfully loses all the happiness he might enjoy both here and hereafter? Rom. iii. 11.

Verse 18.—*Against heaven*, in the sight of God; *before thee*, ungratefully and undutifully to his father.

Verse 21.—*The son said;* the father's kindness did not stop his humble confession, but would rather make him feel it more deeply, Ezek. xxxvi. 31.

Verse 22—*A ring*; it was common to use a signet ring, and the possession of it implied confidence and authority; compare Gen. xli. 42; Esther viii. 2, 8.

APPLICATION.—God's love to the sinner draws him back, meets, and pardons him—rejoices over and adopts him—and finally takes him *home*. John xiv. 1—3. Is that hope ours?

LESSON XXIII.—FAITH IN CHRIST.—JOHN XIV.

In our last lesson we spoke of repentance; but sorrow for sin will not wash away its stain. The penalty has been incurred; justice demands satisfaction. The penalty has been suffered, justice has been satisfied, not by the sinner, but by Christ, when He died for us men, and for our salvation. The sinner, then, has nothing to look to in himself or from himself, but must rely entirely upon the meritorious death and sufferings of the Saviour, by which his guilt has been punished and the demands of the law satisfied, Rom. iii. 28; Gal. ii. 16. Really to believe that this has been effected, that Christ is both able and willing to save us, this is *faith*: we must believe that Christ both *can* and *will* save us, or it would be of no use to apply to Him.

Faith, then, is trust, or confidence, just as a child believes what its parent promises, being satisfied that he will do it. We believe accounts of other countries on the credit of travellers and historians, and we believe in proportion as we are satisfied of the veracity of the narrator, and the means of information he possessed. Now God is Truth, and He knows all things, and He can do all things; we can and ought therefore to trust Him implicitly. But there is a great difference between faith, the conviction of understanding, and the faith of the heart which believeth unto salvation. Many are convinced of the truth of the Bible, who are not affected by the truths of the Bible.

The importance of faith is illustrated by the cities of refuge (Num. xxxv.). The manslayer was liable to be killed by the avenger of blood anywhere, except

within the cities of refuge. If he had doubted his safety when there, or the certainty of his admission when he arrived, and had not hastened thither, his blood would have been upon his own head; there was no safety for him elsewhere. But if, assured that he would be both received and protected, he sought security within those walls, the arm of vengeance was suspended, and he was safe. His faith would have saved him.

In the chapter for our lesson, Christ sought to comfort His disciples after His prediction of His own departure, and of their desertion and Peter's denial of Him. Faith in Him as a Saviour, and in the mercy of God through Him for the pardon of their sins, would be especially necessary to preserve them from despair. Their faith too, would be sorely tried by the insults and death to which He was about to subject Himself. He therefore consoles them with the assurance that His departure would be for their good, and with the promise of their reunion with Him, although their prospects of a residence with Him in an earthly palace were about to be entirely frustrated.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 2, 3.—*Many mansions*: death is but the removal of the believer from one apartment of the Father's house to another more immediately in His presence. All Christians shall hereafter "ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 17).

Verse 5.—None of the Apostles fully believed in Christ's words as to His predicted death, resurrection and ascension, until after those events had taken place Luke xxiv. 21.

Verse 15—24.—True faith will ever show itself by its fruits, and by them its genuineness may be tested, Matt. vii. 16—21. Only the faith that works is a perfect faith, James ii. 17, 19, 20—26. Not that either the works or the faith are the procuring means of salvation, but he who really believes that Christ has died for him, and has washed him from his sins, will think no labour too great to show his love and gratitude. Faith is the gift of God, Eph. ii. 8; vi. 23; Heb. xii. 2; we must therefore pray for it, as did the Apostles, Luke xvii. 5. It is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22), that Comforter whom Christ promised to send to His sorrowing disciples, and who will dwell in us and lead us into all truth (verse 26).

APPLICATION.—Do we possess this real practical faith in Christ? Without it we cannot be saved, John iii. 18, 36.

LESSON XXIV.—THE TEACHING OF CHRIST.—MATTHEW VII. 7—24.

The teaching of our Lord was as striking as His works. He went about doing good to the body,—healing diseases (Matt. viii. 3, 13, 15), casting out devils (Matt. viii. 16; xv. 28), restoring the dumb (Matt. ix. 32; xii. 13), the lame (Matt. xv. 30), the blind (Matt. ix. 29; xii. 13), the maimed, (Matt. xii. 13): and good to the soul,—preaching the glad tidings of salvation, teaching the will of God, and instructing men how to do it, by believing on Him as their Saviour, and by following Him as their example. In His teaching many characteristics may be noticed, which were foretold by the prophets, Is. xlii. 1—4; lxi. 1—3. He taught with authority, Matt. vii. 28, 29,—no enemies could answer Him, and no false reasoning, could resist the power of His divine truth, Matt. xxii. 46; Mark i. 22; vi. 2; Luke iv. 32; John vi. 63, 68. Yet His kindness

and tenderness attracted all who heard him, Matt. xi. 28—30; Luke xii. 1; xv. 1; xx. 19; xxi. 38; xix. 47—48. His wisdom, also, was seen in the way in which He spoke to the heart, and adapted His instruction to the position, wants, and capacities of each. None teacheth like Him!

In our lesson we have a portion of the Sermon on the Mount, the longest public discourse of Christ, recorded in the Gospels. In verses 7—11, our Lord teaches us to trust God as our reconciled Father, and to ask Him for all we need. A child confides for what he wants in an earthly parent, and is not disappointed: how much more then may we trust our Heavenly Father, who is all-wise to know what is good for us, and all-powerful to supply it! The promise is express and positive: none who seek, aright, shall seek in vain. Doubtless, God, who knows all things, may see fit in mercy to refuse many things we ask for, which might be hurtful to us, but in so doing he shows His love. We should think a parent who complied with all a child's requests very weak, because we know that many things he desires would be injurious to him; just so God gives His people what He sees to be best for them. So that, whether our petition be granted or denied, we may rest assured the humble prayer of faith is never disregarded. And all *may* come; the promise is "to all that ask Him." Past sins do not preclude from the benefit, if only we come aright, James i. 5.

In verse 12, our Saviour enforces obedience to the second table of the law, in our behaviour to our fellow-men, by the consideration of this goodness and mercy of God towards us. This has been called Christ's golden rule, and it is the sum and substance of the Old Testament teaching, and of all law of right. For when would wrong be done, if each would do to others what they would desire or expect of them in similar circumstances?

In verses 13, 14, the necessity of earnestness in religion is taught. There are two ultimate destinations for all mankind, and consequently there are two roads. The expressions wide and broad imply that the way to death has many paths suited to the various desires and passions of men, and that there is no difficulty in finding or keeping in it. On the other hand, the strait and narrow path is the way of implicit faith and obedience to God's commandments; and to keep within it requires constant prayer and watchfulness. The gate is too strait (that is narrow) to let in our sinful pleasures, passions, interests, connections, Heb. xii. 1; the path is too narrow to allow us to walk carelessly, Eph. v. 15.

The need of sincerity is the next point in our Lord's discourse. Verses 15—20 show us how to test religious teachers, not to regard what they profess, but what they do; and verses 21—27 teach us the insufficiency of mere profession without practice. To be a Christian in name, but not in deed, will avail nothing at the great day of account. Even gifts and miraculous powers will be no passport at the gate of heaven. Balaam prophesied, but fell miserably, Num. xxxi. 8. Judas cast out devils, but perished hopelessly, Matt. xxvii. 5. Let none of us then presume on outward profession, upon baptism, church membership, attendance on ordinances, or even zealous performance of works of charity and love; all these may consist with a heart untouched by the Spirit of God and unowned by Him. The wise builder (verse 24) comes to Christ, hears His words, and believes them, trusts in His righteousness, atonement, and mediation, and submits himself to His commandments; thus in the hour of danger, in the day of tribulation, trial, temptation, or death, he is upheld, supported, sustained, and comforted. The foolish builder (verse 26) is the mere professor; he hears and assents to the doctrines of the Gospel, associates with Christians, and joins in sacred ordinances, but his faith is dead, and he is not obedient; thus his hope is a delusion, and it

to appear in the day of trial. It fixed in her confidence implanted and nourished, how great indeed is the

APPLICATION.—Pray for grace not only to hear Christ's words, but to do them.

LESSON XXV.—THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST.—MATTHEW IX.

A miracle is a wonderful work, an act of Divine power, differing from the usual course of God's doings (often mysterious) in nature, and impossible to mere human agency. Miracles have ceased since the establishment of Christ's kingdom and the delivery of His written Word, but were employed in the beginning of both dispensations as testimonies to their divine authority. Thus Moses and Joshua wrought miracles, as did the prophets Elijah and Elisha. So, too, the Apostles of our Lord, were invested by Him with similar power, Matt. x. 8; Mark xvi. 17, 18; Acts ii.; iii.; vi. 8, &c.

Christ's miracles were intended as evidences of His Divine mission and claims (see Matt. xi. 4, 5; Luke vii. 20—22; John v. 36; vii. 31; xiv. 11) and were characterised by a perfection far exceeding all wrought by God's human servants. They were done openly, some in the presence of large multitudes, Matt. viii. 1—3; xiv. 21; John xi. 31. There was no doubt of the fact of the miracles being wrought, as they appealed to the senses of the multitudes; as for instance in the case recorded in John ii., where that which had once been water was proved by the evidences of taste and sight to have really become wine. It was by His *own* power all His miracles were wrought, without reference to any one else (Matt. viii. 26; ix. 28, 29; Luke vii. 14), or were only accompanied by an appeal to God *as His Father*, John x. 25; xi. 41, 42. Those who had gone before, and His Apostles after Him, on the contrary, spoke as servants, Ex. vii. 15—17; 2 Kings iii. 16—18; Acts iii. 6, 12, acting by His orders, and distinctly disclaimed any supernatural powers of their own.

Our Lord's miracles were also evidences, in that they had been predicted of the Messiah, Is. xxxv. 4—6; lxi. 1—3. The witness they bore was irresistible, both to friends and enemies, Matt. ix. 8; John iii. 2; vii. 31; ix. 30; xi. 45, 47; xii. 11, yet we know that though they convinced they did not *convert* those who saw them; God's grace alone can do this, see Luke xvi. 29—31.

A touching characteristic of Christ's miracles is, that they were all wrought for merciful objects; to heal the sick, to feed the hungry, to cheer the sorrowing, to give life and beauty to the dead and corrupt. The only instances of the nature of judgment were the destruction of the swine at Gadara (a punishment for violating the law, see Lev. xi. 7), and the withering of the barren fig-tree, Matt. xxi. 19, doubtless intended as a typical warning to the Jews.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 1.—*Passed over* the Sea of Galilee, from Gergesa to Capernaum, at the request of the unbelieving Gergesenes, chapter viii. 34.

Verse 2.—Christ, in forgiving this poor man's sins, gave him a far greater blessing than he sought. All he hoped for was bodily health; what he gained was spiritual and eternal life.

Verse 9.—St. Matthew makes no secret of his despised calling of a publican, see also chap. x. 3. St. Mark and St. Luke call him Levi, when relating this transaction.

Verse 10.—We learn elsewhere (Mark ii.; Luke v.) though St. Matthew

modestly suppresses the fact, that this was a feast given by him, in his own house, probably to make his former friends acquainted with Jesus.

Verse 13.—See Hosea vi. 6. The meaning is, "I prefer mercy (or brotherly ove) to sacrifice." None are righteous, Ps. xiv. 3; the *self-righteous*, perhaps, are meant, verses 14, 15. The Jews were without a king, and the disciples of John were mourning his imprisonment. They had reason to fast. Christ was with His people, and *their* time for such mourning would be when He was taken from them.

Verses 16, 17.—*Bottles* made of skins of beasts, leathern bags, liable to burst with the fermenting of new wine. Christ's religion was not meant to be added to the old religion of the Jews; that was "done away."

Verse 18.—*Ruler*; member of the council which managed the affairs of the synagogue.

Verse 20.—The woman's disorder made her, by the law, unclean, Lev. xv. 25; which (besides her humility) accounts for her approaching Christ by stealth.

Verse 23.—*Minstrels*; hired mourners, playing sorrowful music. Their presence proved the child was really dead.

Verses 33.—Observe four great miracles, all differing in kind, wrought in one afternoon. Well might the crowds exclaim thus.

Verse 34.—The suspicious and unwilling belief of the Pharisees add to the evidence, for we may be sure they would have disputed the *reality* of the miracles, if they could.

APPLICATION.—Christ, in His love and mercy, is ready to heal and save us. Have we sought Him?

LESSON XXVI.—THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HIS INFLUENCES, JOHN XVI.

This chapter and the preceding one were part of our Lord's final instructions to His beloved disciples, and this conversation is supposed to have taken place while they were going down to the eastern gate of Jerusalem, on their way to Gethsemane. The disciples were grieved at the thought of losing their Master. Their whole manner showed their sorrow. Thomas asked, anxiously, "How can we know the way?" Philip, in the same spirit of doubt, asked for what was impossible. Judas also asked how it could be that they alone should see Jesus, and not all the world as well. In all these questionings there appears a deep affection for their Master, mixed up with much mistake as to His real character. Jesus replied to their remarks, but even yet they were not able to understand Him. His answers required some one to make them plain. They understood enough to make them anxious, sorrowful, but not enough to enable them to penetrate through the dark cloud of sorrow, and see the bright light of the risen Sun of Righteousness. Their only Comforter was to be taken away; who should now lead them?

Jesus, pitying their distress and perplexity, now tells them of another Comforter. He had before mentioned this subject, but now He entered more fully upon it. He who should take His place, must have equal power to comfort and instruct. Jesus, in His bodily form, was soon to depart into heaven. He could not be in two places at once. He was going to fulfil His office of Mediator at the throne of God. If the promised Comforter was to abide with them for ever, He must be a Spirit; if He was to take of the things of Christ, and show them to

the disciples, He must be God, Acts v. 3, 4; 1 Cor. ii. 11. Here, then, was comfort indeed for the poor, anxious disciples. An abiding Comforter, one who knew the things of God, John xvi. 15; one capable of teaching all things, John xiv. 26; able to bring all things to their remembrance, John xiv. 26. Even their beloved Master sometimes spoke to them in proverbs or parables (John xvi. 25) many things which they could not bear. Just as children learn by heart many things which they do not understand until they grow up and their minds enlarge, so the disciples heard what Jesus told them, but understood not till the Comforter enlightened them, and made clear what before was dark and obscure.

Our Lord shows His disciples the perfect harmony of the Triune God. The Father giving the Son to die for man; the Son coming down on earth and returning to heaven as perpetual High Priest; the Holy Ghost convincing of sin, Acts ii. 37, converting, John iii. 5; Col. iii. 10; comforting, Rom. viii. 26; sanctifying, 2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 2; teaching the things of Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 3. All these were distinct, yet all uniting to work out man's redemption. Without the Holy Spirit all is dark; with Him all is clear. He is the Author and Giver of life: it was so at the first as to man's body, Gen. ii. 7—it is so still as to the soul, John vi. 63. He it was who inspired the Scriptures, 1 Pet. i. 21; 2 Tim. iii. 16, who gave special miraculous gifts to God's servants of old, and now gives grace to all according to their need. All good works are the fruit of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22—25. If He dwell not in our hearts, vain to us is the love of God the Father, or the blood of God the Son; we see them not, we value them not, Rom. viii. 8, 9. Let us beware, then, how we neglect the movings of God the Holy Ghost, when by our conscience He persuades to good, Eph. iv. 30, or warns us against evil, 1 Thess. v. 19.

Explanatory Notes.—Verse 1—3.—Our Saviour warns His disciples of trials to come, lest their faith should be shaken. Men may have much outside show of religion, without the love of God in their hearts; see Matt. xxiii. 27, 28; Acts vi. 12—14; xxi. 28—31.

Verse 7.—*Expedient.*—Necessary, better. Jesus must return to heaven before the Holy Spirit could descend, John vii. 39.

Verses 8—11.—The Holy Spirit convinces men of sin: He makes them feel themselves not so holy as they once thought; He reveals to the humbled sinner the righteousness of Christ, who is gone to be the Mediator for us. He keeps alive in us the recollection of a judgment to come.

Verses 19—22.—The disciples hesitated to ask the meaning of Jesus' words; but He knew their thoughts, and told them of the shortness of their sorrow and a certainty of a speedy relief from it. He saw and removed their doubts; let us if we are in trouble, bring our doubts and griefs to Jesus, who in verses 23, 24, teaches us to use His mediation in coming before God. "Ye shall ask *Me* nothing," but shall make your requests to the Father in My name. All our prayers are unavailing if offered up in any other name; see Acts iv. 12.

Application.—Do we seek the constant guidance of the Holy Spirit in all we do? Rom. viii. 13, 14.

Lesson XXVII.—The Character of Christ.—Luke IV. 1—32.

We cannot approach the subject of this lesson without deep reverence and humility. Who can analyse the character of the only Perfect Man! Yet while

we fail to realize its entire holiness, and complete beauty, we may yet, amidst our own weakness and infirmity, be able to understand somewhat of His character "who doeth all things well." The *sinlessness* of our Lord is the first point in this lesson. As He was exposed to the assaults of Satan, alone and hungering, the tempter seemed to have every advantage, but he had nothing in Him, John xiv. 30. Jesus resisted all his temptations to distrust, ambition, and presumption, and on all occasions proved how hateful sin was to Him by His grief at finding it, and the agony He bore to remove it. When Satan tempts us, he finds all our passions and corrupt affections on his side, but not so with Christ. He was filled with the Holy Ghost, verse 1; holy, harmless, undefiled, Heb. iv. 15; vii. 26. Even His enemies could find no fault in Him, Mark xiv. 55; Luke xxiii. 14, 15.

Notice also His *submission* and *fortitude*; He voluntarily subjected Himself to this temptation; He would not shrink from any part of the work given Him to do, for thus it became Him to fulfil all righteousness, Matt. iii. 15; Luke xxii. 42.

His *zeal* was no less conspicuous, for no sooner had He been baptised and openly acknowledged by His Father, than He hastened to commence the conflict which was to end in the final bruising of the serpent's head, Luke ii. 49; John xvii. 4; xix. 30.

This chapter leads us to observe also the *spirit in which He taught*; not as the Pharisees, haughtily, overbearingly, or in a sectarian spirit, but with such gentleness and affection as led the men of Nazareth, despite their prejudices, to bear witness to His gracious words. Himself so pure and holy, He could yet care for and love sinful men, Mark vii. 34; viii. 12; Luke xix. 41; John xi. 33—35.

Christ's *meekness* also is shown in this narrative; His love had led Him to Nazareth, where He was despitefully treated. He came unto His own city, yet His own city received Him not; but the ingratitude of the Nazarenes did not cause Him to exercise His power to punish them. Though He shared the glory and power of His Father, He took our human nature upon Him, and lived in poverty, despised, persecuted and unappreciated unto the end.

We may learn, then, from this passage some points, among many others, in the character of Christ; His sinlessness; His submission and fortitude; His zeal; the spirit in which He taught; His meekness.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 1.—*Full of the Holy Ghost*, who had descended upon Him in a bodily form at His baptism, chap. iii. 22. *The Wilderness*, situated most probably along the Jordan and the Dead Sea, to the East of Jerusalem.

Verse 2.—*Forty days tempted*; no particular account is given of these temptations. Those referred to afterwards, took place at *the end* of that time; see Matt. iv. 2, 3. *An hungred*; in his human nature Christ was subject to all the sinless infirmities of our nature; see John iv. 6.

Verse 3.—This temptation was very plausible, as Christ had just before been proclaimed by God as His Son. Satan thus suggested hard thoughts and distrust of God, and urged our Saviour to leave the path of duty, and to use improper means of relief.

Verse 4.—*It is written.* Thus Christ conquered by the sword of the Spirit; so should we order all our conduct, and test all our doctrines by the law and the testimony.

Verse 9.—*The holy city*, Jerusalem. *Pinnacle of the temple*, probably Solomon's porch, which was 150 feet high, and from the top of it to the bottom of the valley below was 700 feet. Satan himself quoted Scripture, though not correctly, as he

omitted the words "in all thy ways." We learn hence not to rely upon isolated passages of Holy Writ, but to compare Scripture with Scripture. Observe, too, Satan had no power to cast Jesus down, though he could tempt Him to throw himself down. So Satan cannot *compel* us to sin, he can only tempt us to do so.

Verse 13.—*For a season*; this implies that our Lord was afterwards subjected to the temptation of Satan.

Verse 17.—The minister was accustomed to hand the book or roll to any one he pleased. *Opened*, literally unrolled; books among the ancients were written on parchments, and rolled together on two rollers, beginning at each end, so that they rolled off one on to the other; see Is. lxi. 12.

Verse 22.—*Is not this*, etc.; the recollection of His mean birth proved a stumbling-block in the eyes of the men of Nazareth.

Verse 25.—See 1 Kings xvii. 9.

Verse 27.—See 2 Kings v. 14.

Verse 30.—*Went his way*. Jesus had a secret power even of stilling human passions; see John xviii. 6.

APPLICATION.—What effect has the contemplation of Christ's character on us? Heb. xii. 1—3.

OUTLINES OF A LESSON.

"I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD."—ST. JOHN VIII. 12—20.

JESUS sometimes taught on a mountain (Matt. v. 1, 2); in a boat (Luke v. 3); by the river-side (Mark x. 1; with John x. 40—42); in the synagogue (Mark vi. 2); and in the temple (John vii. 14). We now find Jesus teaching in the temple (where He was so often to be found), John viii. 20; and we have given as the subject of His teaching on this occasion—"I am the light of the world." See also John xii. 46.

Jesus likens Himself to a door, in John x. 7, 9; to a Shepherd, in John x. 11; to a vine, in John xv. 1—5; and here calls Himself "the light of the world," as He had already taught to Nicodemus (John iii. 19). Seven hundred years before His birth Isaiah had thus prophesied of Him,—"I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles," &c., Isaiah xlix. 6. "I, the Lord . . . . will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house," Isaiah xlii. 6, 7. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined," Is. ix. 2. Simeon by inspiration repeated the same in the temple, as we often sing in our evening service, "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel." And we also sing the prophetic words of Zacharias in Luke i. 78, 79.

Jesus is spiritually what the light of day is to the world—the source of all goodness, spiritual strength and knowledge. The sun is the source of our bright, pleasant, and cheerful light; and the cause of all the greenness of the grass, and of the various colours of the flowers, for the shoots of a plan-

growing in the dark are white and weakly. Jesus is the Son of Righteousness,—"Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings," &c., is the prophecy of Malachi (iv. 2). What weak, lost, helpless sinners should we be without Jesus—"the Sun of Righteousness," and "the Light of the world."

The morning star appearing towards the end of the night, is the harbinger of day, and an earnest that the darkness will soon be dispelled by the rising sun; so was John the Baptist in the darkness that then covered the earth, the forerunner of the Sun of Righteousness (see Luke i. 76, 77). Jesus was not only like a light to show us what to avoid and where to go—"a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path"—when He passed through this world, growing up from the child to become a man, "to set us an example of godly life" (see Collects for Sunday before Easter, and 2nd Sunday after Easter); but He is also like a guiding light in the distance, towards which we are to direct our steps—"to guide our feet into the way of peace," Luke i. 79.

An anecdote may illustrate this:—A lawyer in France once sent his old confidential clerk to Montargis to receive a large sum of money. As the business kept him longer than he expected, and as it was in November, it began to get dusk, before the old clerk left the town on his return. He, however, wished to get back that night, and took the nearest road through the forest of Loiret, where, to perplex him the more among the many groves of trees, a thick fog came on, and he lost his way most irrecoverably, not being able to distinguish whence he had come, or whither he wanted to go. After groping his way about for some time, he at length saw a light far off, at the end of a long avenue; he could not see a yard of the road before him, and could only dimly discern the dark trunks of the trees rising on each side of him; he, however, kept the light steadily before him, which at length brought him to a solitary farm-house, where a large fire was blazing, at which he was invited to seat himself, while some food was being prepared.

If we are steadily following the "Light of the world," we may also be smaller lights in the world, as Jesus told His disciples in the sermon on the mount,—"Ye are the light of the world, ... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. v. 14—16.

There is a glorious promise in Daniel (xii. 3), for those who, by following the Sun of Righteousness, are letting their "light shine before men," that they shall hereafter "shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." Jesus is the only light that we must follow; were we to set up any other character as our pattern or standard, we might be led astray and "drowned in perdition" like an unwary traveller, misled by some Ignis Fatuus, or Will o' the Wisp into a treacherous swamp. To follow Jesus of ourselves we are unable—"No man can come to Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw him." Let us, then, pray to the Father, that with the Holy Spirit's aid we may be enabled to "walk while we have the light," and also to "believe in the light, that we may be the children of light." John xii. 35, 36.

Camberwell. M. T. B.

The Lecture.

CATECHETICAL TEACHING.

A Paper read before the Sunday School Teachers' Training Class of the Church of England Young Men's Society, Islington, By a Superintendent.

The subject to be brought before us this evening is of an eminently practical character. Such subjects are not always the most inviting; indeed, they will interest, not so much in proportion to their own importance, as in the degree that we are already heartily and actively engaged in the work to which they relate. In this, however, is my encouragement in asking your attention to some remarks upon "Catechetical Teaching," or, as I may more precisely state my theme, "Catechising, its Advantages and Method."

From the wide range of topics bearing upon Christian education in Sunday schools, many might be selected more replete than this with materials for a glowing essay; but, limited, as these meetings are, to ladies and gentlemen already enrolled as teachers, whose very attendance at them is evidence that their warm sympathies are with that work, we may venture to pass by some of its more exciting features in order to discuss what to a general audience would doubtless prove but dry detail. There is, indeed, profit to teachers in being occasionally reminded of the object of the Sunday school system, of its past triumphs, its great capabilities, its lofty themes, its assured success, its reflex benefits; the abstract consideration of these and kindred subjects stirs up flagging zeal, renews energy; but, we need not only excitement, we need direction. And the more we recognize the importance of the duties we have undertaken, the more earnestly shall we strive to attain efficiency in their performance. To urge them forward, teachers may and should frequently contemplate the glorious end of all their labours, but they must still feel that an exact acquaintance with, and skill in the use of, the means by which that end may be permanently secured, are of primary necessity and importance. For means must be used, adapted as well to the living intelligent subjects of our teaching as to its objects.

Few, if any, will in these days maintain that personal piety in the teacher is the only requisite for the work professedly carried on in our Sunday schools; but do those engaged in that work adequately realise, what we must assert, that neither do religious feeling and Christian earnestness combined with considerable knowledge of the subjects to be taught, of themselves and alone, constitute a sufficient qualification? The professors of these need not be offended at the assertion; we do not—dare not—under-estimate them; they are essential qualities, and therefore are not to be put into invidious comparison with other qualities also essential; we only insist that, without the ability to impart, their possessor, though an estimable Christian, a benevolent man, and it may be, a learned theologian, is not *a Teacher*.

Real, effective teaching is not an easy matter,—quite the reverse; the ability it demands is not, like speech, a natural faculty common to all; perhaps, indeed, none are altogether destitute of the power to communicate instruction, which, with the power to receive it, so distinguishes man from the brute creation; when however we look at the different results which follow the attempts of those who engage in the work, we cannot but be convinced that it requires something more than mere willingness to use a common natural endowment; and this holds good even of those to whom a "knack for teaching"

(so to speak) seems a natural gift, and who, doubtless (other things being equal), will on that account always be the best teachers.

Teaching is in fact *an art*, proficiency in which, as in all arts, is to be acquired; it may, too, be acquired (in a greater or less degree) by every one who really strives after it. It is by no means uncommon for a superintendent to be able to mark a regular progress in teachers, and even in some cases to be able to find inefficient teachers becoming very good ones; but, in these cases, there have always been careful attention, an observant and thoughtful mind, a willingness to receive hints and suggestions, a desire to profit by the experience of others, and therefore, a diligent inquiry into, and a persevering practice of, the methods that have received general sanction. It is just because teaching is an art—an entirely distinct thing from the acquirement of knowledge in their own minds, which is of course absolutely essential—that the pupil-teachers in our day schools are apprenticed and trained; and a visitor to a day school would see that it is a compound art, too, requiring an union of knowledge, skill, and dexterity, both mental and physical. I see no valid reason for distinguishing between secular and religious teaching in this respect; I do not forget that the special design of Sunday school teaching is to impress the heart, to arouse the conscience; but a child has not only a heart that can feel, a conscience that can discriminate, and acquit or condemn, he has also a mind that can think; this must not be neglected in our care about those; to do so were a fault, for if Sunday school instruction is to lay permanent hold on our scholars, it must address itself to all their faculties, intellectual as well as moral; it were also a blunder, for a teacher will find his own labours lightened (if not lessened) by calling forth all the powers of his pupils. We may therefore take up this position, that there is an art in communicating instruction, a practical (if not a theoretical) acquaintance with which is essential to a teacher's success, whether his sphere of labour be in the Sunday or the day school; and we may add, that proficiency in that art must be attained by both classes of teachers in one and the same way.

My remarks so far, have been somewhat general; they will not however have been without a bearing on the special topic before us, if they lead us to approach it with a reasonable estimate of what our work demands of us, as justifying our faith in its success. I use the term reasonable, advisedly; I do not consider it right reason in the work of religious instruction specially to ignore what is recognized in respect to every other carried on by human agency—the necessity for providing an adequate cause to produce a desired effect; Sunday school teachers may err and have erred, in forgetting the one great efficient cause of all good, and so great efforts on their part have resulted only in failure, for God will not give His glory to another; but do they not also frequently err in forgetting that He does not use them as passive instruments, but rather as intelligent co-workers with Himself? Let me not be misunderstood (and I say this the more earnestly as, having to treat of what may be called a piece of the machinery of instruction, I shall seem probably to dwell very exclusively on second causes), there is an object, dearest to every spiritually-minded teacher,—the conversion of his scholars,—which must efficiently be the work of the Holy Spirit alone; this, and perhaps some minor matters, the teacher has not so much to work for, as to plead for; but there are some things which come entirely within the scope of powers which God has given him; thus he has to inform, to develop, to educate, to train mind; it is with his own mind that he must do this; and how? there

are laws facilitating the action of mind upon mind as there are laws—the laws of physical forces—facilitating operations of which matter is the subject: why should teachers ignore the one more than they would the other? why not feel it their duty and advantage to acquaint themselves with, and to avail themselves of, one as much as the other? Is it true faith honouring God because having any one distinct promise to lay hold of,—I address not the question to those conscious that they are doing all that they can (God accepteth according to that a man hath), nor to those, if there can be any such, whose hearts are not fully in their work, for they have no business to be in it at all—but to those who have really a wish to do good, yet who, having the spirit of love, lack the spirit of power, because, as we think, destitute in this respect of the spirit of a sound mind,—to such, the question is affectionately addressed, Is it true faith, that in an undefined sentimental way looks for results apart from a diligent, it may have to be a laborious cultivation of every faculty, the use of every instrument entrusted to us as a means of producing them? I have to invite your attention to one such instrument. Allow me to precede its introduction with just two or three words on another form of conveying instruction with which it stands in marked contrast.

The form to which I refer is termed the "Akroamatical," from a Greek word signifying "to listen;" the term is perhaps little known, but when we mention its peculiar feature, the imparting of instruction in a *direct* manner, without the pupil's taking any active part in the process, the mode will be immediately recognized by every superintendent, as one largely employed in Sunday schools. It has its advantages when confined within limits in the application of a lesson, for instance, when in a few warm words of direct appeal, the teacher addresses himself more particularly to the consciences or the affections of his scholars. But it is singularly ineffective (except to create listlessness or disorder) when used more freely or alone; and the reason is obvious. It pre-supposes that the taught have the power of steadily fixing their attention on a subject, and following with intelligence a continuous discourse; this may do for a sermon to adults, but will be utterly useless for a lesson to a class of children. We are too apt to think it enough if we deliver a good lesson, and to forget that after all its value to our scholars entirely depends upon the degree in which it is actually received and appropriated by them. Now, in order to be sure that, what we seek to teach shall really enter their minds, and be duly fixed and comprehended there, we cannot do better than acquire the art to use effectively the very important educational weapon known as "catechising." We may not go to quite the length of an old writer's assertion (quoted by Archdeacon Bather in his valuable "Hints on Catechising"), that sermons can never do good upon any uncatechised congregation, but may yet feel that an uncatechised class, like an unploughed field, must yield to its husbandman a harvest sadly disproportionate to the amount of seed sown, and labour expended upon it.

I do not propose to enter upon the subject of *Catechisms*; these would alone furnish materials for an evening's discussion; I will only remark that there is much more difference between catechisms and catechising than would be expressed by saying that the one is the present participle, the other the substantive form of the same word; the former necessitates no mental effort on the part of the teacher, only entailing upon him the somewhat wearisome task of hearing repeated what is in fact the teaching of another, and no effort beyond that of memory on the part of the scholar. I say this without the slightest wish to discourage the use of

all catechisms, or to disparage the great value of some which supply, in a compact form (easily retainable by the memory), the great doctrines of Christianity systematically arranged and theologically expressed; but, I say that such catechisms rather furnish material for catechising than being in themselves catechising, the necessity for which they do not at all supersede; for it is a delusion, though not an uncommon one, to invest the scholar, who correctly repeats the answers, with all the knowledge and accurate perception which those answers contain, as if they were his own deliberately expressed convictions. Catechising, in its true and original sense, implies something more than the mere running over a form, though that consists of proper questions and answers, and contains whatever is needful for faith and practice; no summary of this sort will suffice instead of the necessary exposition in detail. There is, perhaps, no catechism more simple in its phraseology than that of the Church of England; yet the rubric annexed to this reads thus, "The curate shall diligently instruct (mark the word instruct), and examine the children in it," which surely is not the same thing as merely hearing them repeat the words by rote.

What then do we understand to be included in the term "Catechising?" We will start with a definition, and then proceed to consider

1—Its Advantages.

2—Its Method.

Definition:—The Greek word from which it is derived occurs several times in the New Testament, and is translated according to the context to "instruct," "to inform," "to teach."

But all teaching is not catechising, in the sense in which the word is now ordinarily used. The preacher teaches, but he does it in the form of a lecture; he, like the catechiser, clears his way by expounding hard words, or unusual phrases; he endeavours first to fix the minds of his hearers on the main subject treated of, and then to lead them to see the particular points one by one, so that they may understand one before they go on to another; he next deduces the proper inferences, whether for doctrine, practice, warning, or consolation; and, when he has done this, his hearers (his scholars) will have heard what his text has to tell them. But what he does by lecturing, the catechist does by questioning; the preacher tells his hearers what he knows, but the catechist's aim is, by means of leading questions, to make his pupils tell him something which they did not know before, but to which, by his questions, he has led them.

Of course it will be seen that, on the other hand, catechising is not merely questioning; it implies teaching, the imparting of new matter; though, in order to this, many of a teacher's questions must apply to knowledge already imparted, and which, standing by themselves, would be simply examination.

To sum up, then, our definition. By catechising we understand instruction communicated by asking questions, and hearing and correcting the answers, this last chiefly by proposing further questions.

The questions employed by the catechist may be divided into three classes, according to the purposes which they may be intended to serve.

1st. The preliminary or experimental question, by which the teacher feels his way, sounds the depth of his scholars' previous knowledge, and prepares them for the reception of what he designs to teach.

2nd. The question employed in actual instruction; by means of which the thoughts of the learner are exercised, and he is compelled (so to speak) to take a share in giving himself the lesson.

This class is by far the most difficult of the three; for even to an experi-

enced teacher, and one well acquainted with his scholars, it is not always easy by any elucidation or arrangement of thought and steps of reason, to bring them up to the desired point, especially if the subject in hand is an abstract one, and one not easily pictured out:—doubtless this will explain the small use made of it.

3rd. The question of examination; by which the teacher tests his own work after he has given a lesson, and ascertains whether it has been soundly and thoroughly learnt. By the combined use of all these the catechiser (as Bather recommends) first instructs his pupils by questioning knowledge into them, and then examines by questioning it out of them.

Let us now glance at some of the advantages of this mode of instruction.

Advantages.

1. In the answers received to preliminary questions the teacher has (as I just stated) an *Index to the mind of his scholars:* he learns thereby the extent of their knowledge, and is enabled to adapt his instruction to their deficiencies. These questions may be termed the ploughshare of the mind; they lay bare the state of the soil which has to be cultivated; and a teacher, who has not been in the habit of proposing them, can form no adequate notion of the amount of ignorance and misapprehension they will sometimes turn up. The short time that a Sunday school teacher has for his work, renders it most important that none be wasted; but without an acquaintance with his scholars' acquirements, the whole may be lost; he may, on the one hand, be merely reiterating what they already know, imparting therefore no instruction, or he may be attempting to raise a superstructure where no foundation is yet laid.

To begin at the beginning, and thence to lead on step by step, is an important rule in teaching, but how can a teacher know what to his pupil is the beginning, until he has ascertained it by questioning?

2. *Catechising secures attention.*—The power of sustaining attention is in children very feeble; he must be a very lively teacher indeed who can command the minds of a class by an address above a few minutes; the young mind is roving and disinclined to continuous effort of any kind, especially to continuous attention—like the youthful body it craves active employment. We all know how well nigh impossible it is to make a young child sit still long; he throws himself in a few minutes into fifty different postures, and the mental restlessness is akin to the bodily. Catechising fits in with this disposition by affording varied exercise; attention is, indeed, needed, but not in an unbroken chain, the thread of thought being alternately in the hands of teacher and scholar. What Bather says of the advantage of catechising over preaching may be quoted here, because equally pertinent to the too prevalent practice of attempting to teach children by lecturing. He says:—

"Let the Preacher and the Catechist each try his skill with any fifty or one hundred children, and let us see which will succeed best in gaining the first point with them,—I mean simply which can most effectually, and for the longest period, keep them awake and listening, the one by discoursing, the other by questioning, for, if this point be not gained, no other can. Long before half-an-hour shall be out the countenances of the little congregation will assure you whose weapons tell. No doubt the preacher will have delivered, within the space, ten times as much doctrine as the catechiser will have extracted with his utmost painstaking; but what of that? The listlessness of his youthful auditory, the vacant looks of some, and the impatient gazings of the rest in all directions, let you know infallibly that their minds have never been occupied at all; perspicuous the speech

may have been, but, 'like water that runneth apace,' it has passed away from them as it flowed, and whether the matter discussed related to Peter, or James, or John, or the events took place at Jericho or Jerusalem, they know not; the sermon was blameless, but there was no constraint upon them to give their thoughts to it.

"But just here is the Catechist's advantage. His method forces the child to think; some little effort and application of mind is actually extorted from him every moment. Instead of making a speech, the instructor has put a question; perhaps he has got no answer, or a wrong one; but he is not beating the air, and his pains are not thrown away, if he has but shown his pupil that something has been asked of him to which he can render no reply; he has at least arrested his attention, and probably excited his curiosity, and convinced him, moreover, of his ignorance, and made him perceive just in what place and instance he needs information; and, therefore, if he has not made a proselyte, he has got a hearer, and from so small a beginning greater things are soon to follow. A few questions more lead the pupil's mind nearer and nearer to the point to which his instructor desires to lead him, till his eye actually catches it, he sees it for himself, perceives that he has gone a step, and has ground to stand upon in reaching further; and because he had something to do himself to make his advantage of his teacher's hints, and has himself delivered the result of his own reflections, he has discovered that he is capable of something, and his interest is excited, and his mind gladdened, as the present gain of application and effort comes home to him."

In making this quotation I have forestalled somewhat a third advantage of catechising that I had written down,—

3. *It calls for the scholar's own energies and endeavours*—sets him thinking. This, after all, is the main thing; the teacher can only lead along the path of knowledge; the scholar's real progress depends on his putting forth his own powers. It seems, at first, a strange rule, which we find given in Ross's Teachers' Manual of Method, viz., "Teach as little as possible." The author, however, explains that this does not forbid the pupil's learning as much as possible, but only directs that the teacher shall do nothing for his pupil which, with ordinary painstaking, the latter might do for himself. He maintains that the real advancement of the scholar does not depend on the bustle and much talking of the teacher; and we may rest assured that, if we fail to call into early healthful exercise their self-energies and self-endeavours after improvement, we are but indifferently training our Sunday scholars for the intelligent, earnest, religious men and women which we desire them to become. What warrant have we for expecting to work any *permanent* change on the mind, whilst we leave a part of its faculties unprovided for? *Habits of thought and reflection form an essential part of a religious education;* the play of thought is just as active as the play of emotion, and, therefore, if we think (on the subject of religion) to address only the affections, whether of man or child, neglecting the capacities of reflection and thought, we can only look (at best) for a transient benefit. Such negligence is especially inexcusable in the Sunday school teacher; for, if instruction in general is an instrument for unlocking the mind, and strengthening its faculties, he must be a poor instructor, and little competent to accomplish his object in any way, who cannot exercise young people's understandings sufficiently with such a book as the Bible to set before them.

The Author whom I have before

quoted, has a sketch of a lesson which illustrates very nicely the two advantages of catechising I have last mentioned, viz., its securing the scholars' attention, and exercising their thoughts. I must not give you the whole, which would be much too long, but I will just read the commencement, in which it will be seen he leads the class to analyse the lesson, and obtain, by their own efforts, a clear view of its contents. The passage of Scripture is Matt. iv. 1 and following verses. The entire passage having been read, he takes the first verse, and, after one or two questions on phrases therein, proceeds :—

"Now read the verse by clauses after me.

"Then—was Jesus—led up—of the Spirit—into the wilderness—to be tempted—of the devil.

T. "How many clauses have you here?

S. "Seven.

T. "And how many things are you told in them?

S. "Seven.

T. "To what general subject do they all relate?

S. "To Christ's temptation.

T. "Then every clause tells you something about that?

S. "Yes.

T. "Let us go through them again, and see whether it be not so; I think you have got in each clause an answer to a question which may be put concerning it, and that the very words of each may be given as the full and proper answer. Now, you shall question me. Put me a question to which the words of the first clause shall be a reply.

S. "When was Jesus led up to be tempted?

T. "'Then.' So here you are taught—what?

S. "The time when these things took place.

T. "Put me a question to which the words 'led up' shall be an answer.

S. "How came Jesus to be in the wilderness?

T. "He was 'led up.' Here you learn that Jesus was passive in this transaction, He did not go of Himself. Put me a question to which the words 'of the Spirit' shall be the answer.

S. "Who led Him up?

T. "Here you learn by whom He was influenced and placed in the circumstances afterwards related. Put me a question to which the word 'wilderness' shall be the answer.

S. "Whither did the Spirit lead Him?

T. "Here you have the scene of action. Put me a question to which the words 'to be tempted' shall be the answer.

S. "For what purpose did he lead Him into the wilderness?

T. "Here you have an intimation of the main business to be done. Put me a question in which the words 'of the devil' shall be the answer.

S. "Of or by whom was He to be tempted?

T. "Here you learn who actually did the work. The Spirit put Him in a way to be tempted—the devil actually tempted Him."

It may have occurred to you that the *pupils* are, however, rather the catechisers in this instance; true, but that is strongly recommended by some experienced teachers as an occasional exercise, and the principle of catechising is carried out by it: the after part of the lesson, developing these seven clauses, is strictly questioning by the teacher, and is a good study, but I must not detain you further from a fourth advantage attending catechising.

4th. *It aids the memory.* Too frequently in oral lessons the memory only is exercised at the expense of the other faculties of the mind; the teacher works out every particular, and presents it to his pupils with the oft-repeated injunction "remember what I tell you"—but how long will they do so? he defeats his own object. If we practised

more the third class of questions I have mentioned (the examinatory), I fear we should find that our children retain very little of what is thus directly and formally propounded to them. It is necessary to insinuate, as it were, our information into their minds, so that by indirect and tortuous entrance it may be caught and entangled with what is already there, and not slip out again as it would through a direct passage.

Begin with a simple question readily admitting of an answer; on that answer build another question; on the answer to this a third, and so on till you bring your child to the conclusion required.

In going through such a course he not only feels a curiosity as to what will come next, and so keeps his attention awake (curiosity being, says Archbishop Whately, the parent of attention), and a lively interest from the experience of his own in-working power, to both of which results I have before alluded, but he also regards the conclusion with something of the partiality which a mother entertains for her offspring. No wonder if his memory firmly retain information to the inculcating of which have been brought to bear three of the most powerful principles of our nature, curiosity, consciousness of power, regard for one's own.

Some other advantages of catechising I may enumerate, but must not enlarge upon.

5th. It conveys *instruction under the form of dialogue*, which is much more easy, sprightly, and pleasant than any other.

6th. *The scholar appears to give information;* he that instructs is the inquirer, and seems to seek information from him who learns.

7th. Not only does the scholar seem to *discover truth for himself*, which is pleasing to him, but, if questions are pertinently put, he is effectually drawn *to discover his own mistakes*, and so the more readily gives them up. It was this quality that especially recommended the method to the Athenian Philosopher, Socrates, from whose use of it, it derives the name "Socratic," by which it is often designated. He believed that the great impediment to the acquirement of true knowledge, was the possession of fancied knowledge, and that the first business of a philosopher was, not to teach, but, to prepare the mind of his pupil for the reception of truth by proving to him his own ignorance: and he used questioning to this end.

8th. I need scarcely specify as an eighth advantage attending the use of examinatory questions, beyond their informing the teacher how far his instructions have been received, and suggesting wherein he may himself have been deficient, that they are a *recapitulation of the main points of the lesson;* this may be rather a tedious process to the teacher (few like to go over their work twice), but is most beneficial to the children, for not many of them will recollect much of what has not been so repeated; and while, to those who took little heed as the lesson was going on, the repetition comes as a chance of recovering a lost opportunity, to those who received the instruction in an honest and good heart, the last questioning comes like the early rain, to deepen the seed of divine truth, to prevent its lying exposed on the surface, to guard (so far as the teacher can) against its being carried away ere the showering down upon it of those heavenly influences which alone can make it spring forth in beauty and fruitfulness.

(To be concluded in our next.)

SUNDAY SCHOOL ORGANIZATION.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED IN TRINITY SCHOOLS, PLATT, NEAR MANCHESTER, BY MR. JAMES COLLINGE.

(*Concluded from page* 86.)

In all its aspects, the Sabbath school should be in unison with its name. It should be not only the abode of rest, of light, and of comfort, but of joy, serenity, and peace. Love should beam in every face, and intelligence in every eye. On every heart should be inscribed the two great laws of the institution—"Be ye subject one to another;"—"By love serve one another." But when brought into collision with insubordination, as they assuredly will in every school, these magnanimous precepts must never degenerate into weakness. At such times, they who teach and they who rule, must act in concert, for when anarchy prevails, rebellion will succeed. To subdue insubordination at school, requires the tact and resolution of Luther, combined with the forbearance and gentleness of Melancthon. In the school, if any where, disorder must uniformly be dealt with according to well established customs and laws. To be obeyed and respected, the law must be fairly and impartially administered. In dealing with offenders, the teacher should always be the first to correct what is amiss in his own class. But whenever necessity, or the rules of the school demand it, he should confer with the superintendent, who, in a military sense, should have as much command of the school as the general has of the army, though he should be held responsible for every act. In all cases of misdemeanour, he should cause inquiry to be made, before correction is administered. Instead of finding fault at every turn, he will best uphold his own authority, and that of the teachers, by holding them responsible for the general behaviour of their own classes, and on all occasions they should receive his admonitions, and submit to his decisions with the utmost deference and alacrity. To command respect, the superintendent should be a man of undoubted but unostentatious piety, a lover of children, apt to teach, discreet in conversation, and amiable and consistent in his manner of life. As a rule, he should be selected from the teachers, and should be elected by the managers, not for life, but periodically. To render this mode of appointment popular, equitable, and salutary, the teachers should have the right to elect from their own body a certain number of representatives to serve on the Managing Committee for a limited period. The superintendent, in conjunction with the conductor of the Preparatory Teachers' Training Class, should be empowered to introduce to the managers all persons eligible to become teachers; but no one should be so introduced without the concurrence of two-thirds of the teachers present at one of their ordinary meetings, because it sometimes happens that persons glide into their ranks who have no more right to be there than Simon Magus had to be numbered with the Apostles. That this is a personal right, as well as a just and necessary restriction, is proved by the fact that the first vacancy amongst the twelve Apostles was filled up by lot; that is, by the votes of the eleven, and by the votes of the brethren at a meeting of one hundred and twenty members of the primitive church. This mode of election to public offices, both civil and ecclesiastical, has prevailed for ages in this country.

Now, we may fairly ask, Why should

not a similar method be adopted by those who are entrusted with the working and management of Sunday schools? They do not labour for the praise of men, but for the glory of God, and for the good of society. To do this effectively, however, they must receive their commission at the hands of their fellow men, whose oversight and approbation tends to quicken their zeal, and to strengthen their hands in the discharge of duties that are oftentimes both painful and arduous; but in all this they feel that they rise up to fellowship with the Man of Sorrows, knowing that the more they do for God the more they are indebted to Him. Yet even where these profound convictions exist, there is in the human breast an inherent longing for a present reward. It is therefore impolitic and unjust to ignore this instinct of our common nature in the organisation of public institutions.

Now, if the worst aspects of society may be traced to defective educational organisation, as well as to the accumulation and perversion of secular agencies, how much depends even upon the posture and evolutions of the scholars in going through their school exercises! But how much more depends upon the lessons to be taught, and the manner of enforcing them! In Church schools, the morning lesson should be based upon one or other of the Lessons, Gospels, or Epistles for the day, as prescribed by the Book of Common Prayer. When reading the Lessons, the scholars should be required to stand, and they should be allowed to sit when the Lessons are being explained, because an occasional change of posture relieves both body and mind. If there be sufficient time for two lessons at either end of the day, the first should embrace consecutively the Church Catechism, the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, and Church History, including the operations of Missionary Societies. The principal Sunday lesson should always be taken from the Scriptures, the subject of which should be posted up in the school-room, and be orally announced a week beforehand. It has been proved by experience that the historical portions of the Bible are best adapted for the instruction of youth, because they are true to nature, and present a living and complete picture of man in every phase of his existence. In exceptional cases, the lessons may be prepared and submitted weekly at a meeting of the teachers, either by the clergyman, the superintendent, or other duly authorised person. To supply every want, and to suit the capacities of all, this course of instruction should be graduated and simultaneous, and should be taught throughout the school at one and the same time, and the several grades should be taught separately in the classes alloted to each. At the close of the lesson, the whole of the scholars should be questioned upon its leading features, which should be practically applied and enforced by the conductors. These concluding exercises should not last longer than fifteen minutes, and should be conducted according to a settled plan in which the teachers should occasionally take a part, under the direction of duly constituted authority. In this way a lively interest would be sustained, and a succession of well-trained persons would always be at hand to officiate in case of emergency, and to supply vacancies as they take place. But as there are so many contingencies in the life of every individual, and as in a large school there are so many teachers who cannot possibly attend the teachers' meeting on all occasions, it is not good to depend upon any one person for the weekly production of a well-digested course of lessons. Books being designed to aid the memory, to furnish ideas, and to assist the mind in its operations, it is obvious that they are indispensable as a rule. It would be easy to name a host of books, all of which are more or less adapted for Sunday schools, but it is not so easy to find any considerable

number of persons of the same opinion as to any or all of them. In the opinion of some eminent educationists, "The Gospel Treasury, or Treasury Harmony of the Four Evangelists," arranged according to Greswell's "Harmonica Evangelica," by Robert Mimpriss, a layman of the Church of England, is one of the best books for Sunday School Teachers that has yet appeared.

As Sunday school labourers, tied to no system, and wedded to no sect or party, we can have no desire but one, the good of the whole; and therefore it would ill become us either to extol, or to depreciate above measure the literary contributions of any who have laboured to promote this great enterprise. Neither do we wish to disparage the age in which we live; much less can we take pleasure in exposing the defects of our most cherished institutions,—those truly Christian asylums of the stranger and the outcast, and which, above all, are specially designed for the children of the industrious classes in large towns, and for the sturdy offspring of a noble peasantry throughout the land.

There are occasions, however, when the most unpalatable truths must be told; and in this case the truth is, that the Sun of our system is being obscured in the Sunday training of our schools by the almost total neglect of any prominent or systematic study of the Life and Ministry of our blessed Lord. This is not as it ought to be. Of 150 schools that have been exercised and examined, of all grades and denominations, not more than five were found to have any connected and comprehensive acquaintance with His mission as a personal Saviour, in all His offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King, nor as one who is pre-eminently the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the only connecting link between heaven and earth, the sole Mediator and Intercessor between God and man.

Now, if we wish our youth to walk in the steps of Jesus, we must, by the Spirit's help and guidance, teach them *how* and *where* to trace these steps, that they may learn, like him, to go about doing good; and that, as they mark His foot-prints throughout the length and breadth of Palestine,—as one of us, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh,—they may be constrained to exclaim, as they of old, "He hath done all things well; he maketh both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak." Now, if the glories of Emanuel and the unfathomable depth of His character and resources should constitute the teaching of Sunday schools, as nurseries of the Church, we conclude that all other teaching in these institutions, in our case, are now out of place, if they do not unfold or illustrate the amplitude of this great thesis. We also reiterate the statement, that every member of the Church, in his vocation and ministry, is bound by every consideration to do all he can for the accomplishment of a work so beneficent and so blessed as that of bringing the lambs into the fold of the Good Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep. But if this glorious consummation is to be achieved by us or by our successors, we must amend our ways and our doings. We must place more honour upon God's dear Son, less upon ourselves, by setting Him forth, not only as our Redeemer, but as our example, ever remembering that it is written—"Them that honour me, I will honour." It is on this principle that we are enjoined to honour those who teach for their work's sake, whether ordained, as the Apostles were, or being unordained, like Aquila and his wife Priscilla, who are said to have taught even an Apollos, to whom they expounded the ways of God more perfectly. Whilst, therefore, we regard the humblest teachers as capable of and entitled to superior training and culture, we must not imperiously demand their services, nor ignore their rights as freemen when giving those services. We

must draw them to the work by rational means—by the cords of love and bands of a man,—so that they may fly to the rescue of perishing immortals, under a deep sense of the obligation implied in that sublime exclamation—"The love of Christ constraineth us." They should be called to this work in the most deliberate and impressive manner, and their qualifications should be well ascertained; but social position, in itself considered, should neither recommend nor disqualify any one for the office, who may wish to become a teacher under proper regulations. When making appointments, Church membership in full communion should not be overlooked, though it need not in all cases be made an absolute condition. The custom of appointing one teacher for the forenoon and another for the afternoon to the same class, should be avoided, because it involves a divided interest, a divided affection, a divided control, and a divided responsibility.

A plurality of superintendents, together with a number of gentlemen of local standing and influence as visitors, should be appointed in every school. To bring the promoters and the managers into contact with the scholars and their parents, there should occasionally be, both convivial and devotional meetings, to which all should be invited. There should be quarterly or half-yearly meetings for parents, when subscribers, teachers, and conductors should be present. The scholars should be excluded on principle, because there are occasions when they should be taught by example that they are not yet upon an equality with their parents or their superiors. When dealing with children, they must not be petted, but restrained; not abused, but encouraged; not lashed for the most trivial errors, and exonerated for the most defiant and outrageous conduct. Whilst young, they should be trained to feel that by nature they are in no respect different from a servant, that as yet they are under tutors and governors during the Father's pleasure. They must learn, betimes, that the discipline of youth is designed to prepare them for the duties of life, to conquer self, to quicken the influence of the soul, to mature their moral sensibility, to elevate their spiritual desires, to develop the whole man, so that as they grow in stature they may also increase in wisdom and in favour with God and man. This is Sunday and domestic teaching—"the ladder by which the infant spirit ascends the heights of being;" it is the progress of the soul in strength, enabling it to fulfil with benefit to others and with happiness to itself the great functions of its being. This, then, is emphatically the great object of Christian organization, the sum of all our efforts. "To be blessed IN our DEED, the service *must be* the outgoing of the benevolent affections." When the heart is in the work, every stroke awakens joy. The labour of love is the music of life. The soul that goes out in true benevolent service soars into the sunshine of being, and is borne onward and upward by the spirit of the universe—the inspiration of God. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

[We deem it necessary to repeat the remark appended to the first part of this Lecture, that while willing to give the views of an old and experienced friend of Sunday Schools a place in our pages, we must not be understood as adopting his suggestions as our own.—EDS.]

Plans and Intelligence.

TEACHERS' PRAYER UNION.

ALL who have experienced the power of prayer, and proved the faithfulness of God's promises, and who have the cause of Sunday schools at heart, are affectionately invited to join with many fellow-Christians, like-minded with themselves, in supplicating week by week for a special blessing on all connected with Sunday school work as follows:—

April 5th.—*For the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on all engaged in Sunday school work*, that He may guide them into all truth, and make them new creatures in Christ Jesus.

April 12th.—*For all Sunday School Teachers*, that they themselves being taught of God, may be able to train up those committed to their charge in all godliness.

April 19th.—*For the Church of England*, that it may ever be a portion of the true Church of Christ, and that God may preserve it from all false doctrine.

April 26th.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, that all who take part in the management of its affairs may be under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

May 3rd.—*For all Sunday School Superintendents*, that they may have grace given them to fit them for the due discharge of their important duties.

May 10th.—*For all Sunday Scholars*, that they may continually grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of Christ their Saviour.

May 17th.—*For all Clergymen*, that they may be able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit, utterance being given them that they may speak the word with all boldness.

May 24th.—*For the Parents and Families of our Sunday Scholars*, that they may walk in the light of the Gospel themselves, and further the efforts of the teachers in bringing their children to the knowledge of the truth.

May 31st.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, that its Publications may be preserved from all false teaching, and may be eminently blessed to the furtherance of the Gospel among the youth of our land.

June 7th.—*For those who have passed through our Sunday Schools*, that they may show, by their daily lives and conversation, that they have not received the grace of God in vain.

June 14th.—*For all Missionaries*, that they may preach the Gospel to every creature, and realize the fulfilment of the Saviour's promise, "Lo, I am with with you alway."

June 21st.—*For our Sovereign and the Royal Family*, that they may be enriched with all temporal and spiritual blessings, and that they may protect the Church from foes within and from enemies without.

June 28th.—*For the Sunday School Institute*, that He who ordereth all things according to His will, may strengthen the hands of those who have the management of its affairs by raising up fresh friends and supporters for the Society.

*** Copies of this Paper may be obtained *gratis* on application at the Offices of the Institute, 41, Ludgate Hill, E.C.

TEACHERS' SUNDAY MORNING PRAYER MEETINGS.

[The Author of the Papers under this heading, in the last Number of our Magazine, then explained the manner in which he proposed they should be used, at the Weekly Prayer Meetings of Teachers on Sunday morning; and he accompanied his suggestion by examples of short pointed Addresses on passages of Scripture directly bearing on their work. Believing that the plan would be a source of strength and blessing, and that, if circumstances prevent its adoption weekly, it might be introduced into the Monthly Prayer Meetings, held by the Teachers in most Sunday Schools, we are very thankful to the Author for kindly furnishing us with a few more examples of the sort of address suitable for such occasions, and for promising to supply them for the remainder of the present year. Ed.]

III.

(For the First Sunday in April).

"As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you."—John xx. 17.

At this season of Easter, we may appropriately select for reflection some of the words of the risen Saviour when He appeared to His sorrowing disciples in the upper room at Jerusalem. And of these, which can be more suitable for a teacher's meditation than the solemn and significant declaration of the text?

"As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." There is an analogy between the mission of the Son of God, and the mission of His apostles, or of any follower, however humble and feeble, in their steps.

Let us try and trace this analogy. We see it (1) in the *motive* to which Scripture refers our Lord's mission. "God so *loved* the world that He sent His Son." And it is a like gracious pity which the Lord Jesus exhibits in charging His servants to declare the salvation He came to work out. Being "moved with compassion," because "the harvest is plenteous," He sends forth "labourers into His harvest." (2) In the *purpose* of our Lord's mission. He came "to seek and to save that which was lost," and such is the purpose of every labour of love to which Christ prompts the Church or the individual Christian. (3) In the power with which our Lord was endued for the accomplishment of His work. While not forgetting His own omnipotence as God, we must not fail also to recognize the fact that to the Man Jesus the Father "gave not the Spirit by measure," and that His human nature was "anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power." And so does He consecrate and strengthen for His work those who obey the call to labour in His vineyard. At the same time that He pronounced the words of our text in that "upper room," He "breathed on" the apostles, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." May He thus breathe upon each and all of us! (4) In the ultimate *result* of His mission to which Christ looked forward. "For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross," confident that in the fulness of the time He should "see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied." And not less surely shall each one who now sows the precious seed faithfully, though it be with weeping, "come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

In these and in many other respects, the analogy holds good. As the Father sent the Son, *even so* the Son sends us, from a like motive, with a like purpose, in a like strength, to work towards

a like certainty of result. It is a blessed reflection, in itself, that we are commissioned by love, sent to save the lost, endowed by the Divine Spirit, and promised a final harvest. But surely this blessedness is heightened when we remember that the Saviour Himself has undertaken and finished a work with the very same features.

If, then, our work as teachers is so truly Christ-like, what a motive have we for being ourselves Christ-like in its prosecution! If, as the Son was sent by the Father, so we are sent by the Son, let our holy resolution be, "Lord as Thou didst obey the Father, so will we strive to obey Thee." Let us study the spirit in which He lived on earth, and in which He dealt with the souls of man. Let us imitate His absorbing devotion to His holy mission, His meekness and patience under trial and opposition, His unflinching perseverance to the end. May we go to our several classes this day and always, adopting and setting our seal to His words, "Lo, I come . . I delight to do Thy will, O my God!"

IV.

"And so spake, that a great multitude, both of the Jews, and also of the Greeks believed." ACTS XIV. 1.

THERE is an error common among teachers, which arises from a feeling that in other forms frequently manifests itself among Christians, and which this verse seems designed to rebuke. A teacher will be negligent in prayer, hurried in preparation, forgetful of visiting, unpunctual in attendance, loose in discipline, flagging in earnestness; and then, in reflecting upon the little effect his teaching has upon his class, he comforts himself with the thought that human efforts are useless, without the Divine blessing, and virtually charges upon God the carelessness of his boys as to their spiritual state.

Now we cannot too strongly both affirm and realize the absolute necessity of the work of the Holy Ghost, if a saving change is to be effected in any heart. We cannot think too little of all that man can do, or depend too entirely on Him, who alone can enlighten the understanding, win the affections, or subdue the will. But there is another side to the question. God enjoins upon us earnestness and diligence just as if all depended on ourselves, and that much does depend on ourselves is implied in many passages of Scripture, and notably in that before us. They "*so spake* that many believed." The effect is directly referred to something in the preaching of Paul and Barnabas, and it is implied that if they had not *so* spoken, the result would not have followed. How is this? It is just this,—that God has attached His promises to the performance of our duties. For example, as regards prayer, He gives the Holy Spirit "to them that ask Him," and "we have not, because we ask not." Then as regards a diligent use of means, it was the man who traded with his talents, not the man who laid them by, that obtained the profit and received the reward. In short, we are to work, as if all depended upon ourselves, and at the same time to trust solely on the exclusive power of the Divine Spirit; and then we may be assured God will honour those that honour Him, not by faith only, but also by obedience.

They "*so* spake." How? We may well imagine. In respect of *motive*, they spoke as men "knowing the terrors of the Lord," and constrained by the love of Christ. In respect of *matter*, they "testified repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." In respect of *manner* they "became all things to all men." In

respect of assiduity and earnestness, they "ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." While as to dependence, the conviction of each was, "Not I, but the grace of God which is with me."

May we so speak, that our scholars may indeed believe! May each of them feel in his inmost heart that we are longing, striving, praying, for their salvation!

V.

"Then will I teach trangressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." PSALM LI. 13.

Certainly the spirit breathed in these words is very unlike that in which some teachers often, and perhaps all occasionally, go to their classes week by week. It is a spirit of glad readiness and of confident anticipation. How many of us are kept up to our work mainly by the force of habit, or by a sense of duty, and how few have any real belief that their teaching will result in souls being actually converted! And the contrast is still more striking, when we remember that David uttered these words just after the detection of his great sin, when despondency would surely enshroud his soul, if at any time.

The whole significance of the expression lies in the first word, "*then*." At some time, and under some circumstances previously named, David would do what the verse implies he could *not* do now; "*then*" he would teach transgressors God's ways; "*then*" they should be converted.

Look at the preceding verses. David is laid low under the crushing sense of guilt and defilement. With broken heart he implores mercy. He pleads for a new heart. He entreats the continued presence of the Divine Spirit. He remembers what "the joy of God's salvation" had been to him in former days, and he longs for its restoration to his soul; and knowing the influence upon him of conscious pardon and peace before, he looks forward with eagerness to what he shall be able to do when God has again caused His face to shine on him.

Does not the passage illustrate the intimate connection between the condition of our souls on the one hand, and both the spirit and the result of our teaching on the other? If we are conscious of indulged sin, or of neglect of Christ, or if our souls are "walking in darkness and have no light," then it is no wonder if the hour of school is an unwelcome time to us, or if we meet our scholars with a weary hopelessness that cramps our efforts; and though undoubtedly God does sometimes give Divine power to the words of a faithless, or even of an ungodly teacher, yet such an one has no right to expect it; but if we are in possession of what David prayed for—the assurance of sin forgiven, the renewed spirit, the upholding of God's "free Spirit"—*then*, with cheerful alacrity, can we teach the marvellous "ways" of His grace and wisdom to the most stubborn of young "transgressors;" *then* with undoubting faith can we anticipate that from our own class "sinners shall be converted unto Him."

If, therefore, we would be happy teachers, if we would be successful teachers, we must be living in deep contrition for our sin, in trust on the Saviour's merits, in continual looking to the Spirit's help; so shall our labour "not be in vain in the Lord."

E. S.

Sunday School Institute.

QUARTERLY RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

THE Public Meetings of the Society for the present year commenced with

THE NEW YEAR'S SERVICE AND SPECIAL COMMUNION FOR TEACHERS,

which was held at St. Dunstan's Church, Fleet Street, on Tuesday evening, the 5th of January. The Communion Service was followed by an Address to Teachers, by the Rev. EDWARD SPOONER, M.A., Vicar of Heston, who chose for his text St. Luke xvii. 20, 21, "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." After a very earnest and appropriate discourse, full of valuable suggestions and encouragements to all who are seeking to add to the kingdom of Christ the young ones committed to their care, the Holy Communion was administered to the teachers present by the Rev. E. AURIOL, M.A., the Rector, and the Rev. J. A. BAILEY, the Curate of the Church. By joining in such a service we feel sure that many were enabled to go forth to a New Year of labour with renewed energy and thankfulness.

The plan of holding meetings in the various suburbs of the metropolis, instead of at the Rooms of the Institute, having been determined upon by the Committee, arrangements have been made for continuing to pursue this course during the next quarter, as it has proved so satisfactory in the past.

AT ISLINGTON

the following Meetings will (D.V.) be held, in continuance of the course to be given at the Parochial School-Room, Little Cross Street, to commence at eight o'clock, except the Infant Class at half-past seven:—

April 26, Training Class, "The Report of the Spies," Num. xiii. 17—33, Mr. S. B. POWER.

May 31, Conversational Meeting, "Discipline," Rev. G. ALLEN.

June 28, Training Class, Elementary, "The Israelites fed with Manna" (Tablet Lesson), Mr. J. F. REID.

To meet the convenience of teachers residing in the northern part of the same parish, an additional course was prepared, held at the several Schools specified, to which teachers in neighbouring schools were invited:—

February 18.—*Vestry Hall, St. Paul's, Ball's Pond.* Conversational Meeting: Subject, The Teacher in his School, by Mr. W. SANDEN.

February 25.—*St. Stephen's School Room, Canonbury.* Training Class (Bible) "The family of Bethany," St. John xi. 1—19, by Mr. J. A. OWTHWAITE.

March 10.—*Vestry Hall, St. Paul's, Ball's Pond.* Training Class (Testament), "Christ in the Storm," St. Mark iv. 36—41, by Mr. F. J. WOODS.

March 17.—*St. Bartholomew's, Hey's Place.* Training Class (Infant), "Jonah," by Mr. F. P. SHERRIL.

A Conference of Clergy, Superintendents and Teachers in the Parish of

ST. PANCRAS

was held on the 26th of January, under the Presidency of the Rev. CANON CHAMPNEYS, M.A., the Vicar, at which a Local Corresponding Committee was formed, by whom the following arrangements were made for a course of Meetings to be held at the National Boys' School Room, Southampton Street, Euston Square, to commence at a quarter past eight precisely:—

Friday, February 12, Training Class (Bible), "The Shunamite Woman," 2 Kings iv. 8—37, Mr. F. NORTON.

Friday, March 11, Training Class, (Testament) "The Ten Lepers Healed" (Luke xvii. 11—19), Mr. C. E. KEATES.

Friday, April 8, Training Class (Bible), "The Sin-Offering," Lev. xvi., Mr. S. B. POWER.

Friday, April 29, Conversational Meeting, "The Teacher's Work," Mr. W. SANDBY.

Friday, May 13, Training Class (Elementary), "The Nobleman's Son Healed" (Tablet Lesson), Mr. J. F. REID.

Friday, June 10, Training Class (Testament), "Joseph and his Brethren," Mr. HENDERSON.

A deputation from the Society attended the Conference of clergy and teachers held at Christ Church, Camberwell, on the 19th of January, over which the Venerable Archdeacon UTTERTON presided, at which it was resolved to establish a

CAMBERWELL AUXILIARY

of the Institute, of which the Ven. Archdeacon of Surrey is President, and the Local Clergy the Vice-Presidents. The Local Committee has issued the following Programme of Meetings in that neighbourhood:—

February 19.—*At Christ Church School, Old Kent Road.* Conversational Meeting, "The Teachers' Aim and Responsibilities," by Mr. J. F. REID.

March 22.—*At Camden Schools, Camberwell Road, Peckham.* Training Lesson (Bible) "Jonah," by Mr. F. NORTON.

April 12.—*At St. George's Schools, New Church Road, Camberwell.* Training Lesson (Testament) "Jesus in the Synagogue at Nazareth," St. Luke iv. 16—32, by Mr. S. B. POWER.

May 15th.—*At St. Mary's Schools, High Street, Peckham.* Elementary Class (Tablet Lesson), "Worldliness Condemned," St. Matt. vi., by Mr J. G. FLEET.

June .—*At St. Giles's Schools, Camberwell Green.* Training Lesson, by Mr. H. G. HEALD.

These Meetings to commence at half-past seven o'clock.

In addition to these systematic arrangements,

DEPUTATIONS

from the Institute have attended Meetings as follows:—

On January 6, Mr. HEALD attended a Meeting of Teachers at Chelsea.

On January 9, Mr. HEALD took part in a Conference of clergy and teachers on Sunday school work at Acton, at which the Bishop of London took the Chair.

On January 12, Mr. HEALD attended a meeting of parents, teachers, and children, at St. Mary's, Spital Square; and on the 13th a similar meeting at the City Sunday School.

On January 29, Mr. NORTON attended as a Deputation at a meeting of teachers at Weymouth, when he gave an Address and a Training Lesson.

On February 6, Mr. HEALD attended a large gathering of clergy and teachers at Staleybridge, on behalf of the Society. More than 1,000 persons were present.

On March 1, Mr. J. F. REID gave an address to teachers at St. Barnabas' School, Highbury Hill.

The Committee have the pleasure to announce that, beside the several District Meetings already referred to, the following General Meetings have been appointed, viz.,—the

QUARTERLY DEVOTIONAL MEETING

of the members of the Society to be held at 41, Ludgate Hill, on Tuesday evening, the 5th of April, at half-past seven o'clock, to be conducted by the Rev. EDWARD AURIOL, M.A.

THE ANNUAL MEETING

of the Society will be held on Thursday

evening, the 21st of April, at St. James's Hall, Piccadilly. The Chair will be taken at half-past six o'clock by J. C. COLQUHOUN, Esq. The Rt. Rev. the Lord BISHOP OF LONDON has kindly promised to take part in the proceedings.

THE FUNDS

of the Society have received the following additions during the past Quarter:—

NEW ANNUAL SUBSCRIBERS.

	£	s.	d.
Rev. F. C. Hose	1	1	0
Rev. J. A. Strong	1	0	0
E. Calrow, Esq., increased to	1	1	0
J. Witherby, Esq.	1	1	0
Rev. H Powell	0	10	6
J. W. Butterworth, Esq.	1	1	0
Rev. J. Ranking	0	10	0
R. H. B.	1	1	0
B. Castle, Esq.	0	10	6

NEW SUBSCRIBING SCHOOLS.

St. John's, Battersea	1	1	0
St. Mark's, Preston	0	10	6
Herne Bay	0	10	6
St. Thomas', St. Helen's	0	10	6
Pinner	0	10	6
St. John's, Angel Town	0	10	6
Marske	0	10	6
North Lopham	0	10	6
South Lopham	0	10	6
St. Barnabas', Islington	1	1	0
St. Bartholomew's, Islington	1	1	0
St. Mary's, Maidenhead	0	10	6
St. Catherine's, Northampton	0	10	6
St. Giles', Camberwell	1	1	0

DONATIONS, ETC.

Christmas Gifts from Teachers	74	11	9
Lady Willoughby de Broke	20	0	0
Mrs. Oakeley	20	0	0
R. C. Bevan, Esq.	10	0	0
R. Dawes, Esq.	10	10	0
Rev. H. W. Sheppard	5	0	0
J. Richardson, Esq.	5	0	0
John Sperling, Esq.	5	0	0
Mr. Greenbank	1	1	0
"Omicron"	5	0	0
T. S. Longueville, Esq.	1	0	0
Collection at Christ Church, Hampstead	11	13	0
Ditto, at St. Dunstan's	4	0	0
Miss Pepys	0	5	0
S. Low, Esq.	5	0	0
J. Braithwaite, Esq.	5	0	0
H. E. Murrell, Esq.	1	1	0

While most grateful to the supporters of the Society for the help they afford, the Committee cannot but feel how inadequate the means placed at their disposal are to carry on efficiently the operations of the Institute; and they are very anxious that its liabilities should be removed, in order that it may extend its sphere of usefulness, and that its influence may be beneficially felt in every Sunday school connected with the Church of England. Hitherto, from having entered upon the course of printing and publishing books, magazines, and *materiel* especially needed in Sunday school work, without possessing a working capital, debts for the cost of their production have been incurred, which though covered by the value of stock in hand, yet prove a hindrance and discouragement in carrying on their work. A few years ago an effort was made to raise a thousand pounds, to reduce very greatly this liability, and many warm-hearted friends then came forward most generously to aid the Society. The amount was collected in the course of two years; but during that time, the ordinary income of the Society diminished so greatly, that only *half* the amount was actually *added* to the Funds, and of this, a large portion was contributed by the members of the Committee, and their friends. Years of depression have since followed; Lancashire distress has told sensibly upon this, and all other charitable institutions, and hence our Society is now as much hindered by liabilities as it was before the last special appeal was made. So sure are the Committee of the excellency of the work they have undertaken, however, that they are resolved not to be discouraged; but with prayer for God's blessing, and effort on their own part, and support from the members of the Church of England, in whose cause they are engaged, they are determined still to endeavour *permanently* to establish the Sunday School Institute, unfettered by debt, and free to enter upon

a wider field of usefulness. In this spirit, they have once more to make a

SPECIAL APPEAL

to those who value Sunday schools, and love the Church of England, in the confident hope that a Society which combines the consistant Scriptural teaching of that Church with the work of the Sunday school, and which seeks to raise the standard of religious instruction among the youth of our land, will not be allowed to languish for want of the very moderate income it needs. Several kind friends have promised liberal gifts, towards raising *a Thousand Pounds*, provided the whole is obtained during the present year, irrespective of the ordinary income of the Society, in order that this sum may be applied towards the liquidation of the present liabilities of the Institute. We hope that many of the friends of the Society, which is now in the twentieth year of its existence, will be disposed to join in this generous endeavour to place it in a position of permanent utility. The following amounts have been already promised towards this

SPECIAL FUND.

	£	s.	d.
R. Dawes, Esq.	50	0	0
A Friend, per do.	50	0	0
E. L. & F. M., do.	100	0	0
George Barker, Esq., per Mr. Sandby	100	0	0
Friends, per H. G. H.	50	0	0
S. B. Power, Esq.	25	0	0
Arthur P. May, Esq.	25	0	0
F. L. Clayton, Esq.	25	0	0
F. C. Hilhouse, Esq.	10	0	0
Philip Casenove, Esq.	10	0	0

Notices of Books.

We beg to call the attention of our readers to the little volume of NOTES ON LESSONS from the BOOK OF PROVERBS, for Elementary Classes, which has just been published by the Institute, —reprinted from the Monthly Magazine of last year. They explain simply, yet clearly, the Proverbs selected to enforce the several Lessons, and each subject is illustrated by examples from Scripture or by anecdotes, followed by a general application. Though primarily designed as Lessons for the younger classes, and admirably suited to their purpose, they will also furnish useful outlines for Addresses on the great doctrines and duties which the Proverbs teach.

THE PEEP OF DAY (London: Hatchard) is too well known by all who are interested in the religious instruction of very young children, to need any recommendation from us. But we desire to make known that a new and cheap edition—the hundred and eighty-first thousand!—has just been issued, well printed and illustrated, to sell for fourteen pence, which we are sure will tend to widen its already large circulation. No book is so admirably adapted to interest infant minds in the knowledge of Divine truths,—brought down simply and lovingly to their capacity,—as is the "Peep of Day."

ZOE'S BIBLE, the Story of an Orphan, by Rev. G. R. Wynne (London: Macintosh) is a very natural and interesting account of a poor clergyman's daughter, long struggling alone in the world, but at last finding a friend to help her in her soul's conflicts with doubts and fears, and to comfort and gladden her last days. Many useful thoughts for anxious and timid believers are scattered through this little story, which is pleasantly told, and carries with it evidences of its reality.

OLNEY AND THE LACE-MAKERS (London: Macintosh) is a model book of its kind, and one of a class which we should be glad to see multiplied. It is a profitable employment, and a very enjoyable one too, to visit a place which such men as Cowper, John Newton, and Thomas Scott, have made memorable as the scenes of their lives and labours; and to blend with descriptions of the locality notices of their personal character, passages from their works, and some account of the people now inhabiting the spot thus rendered remarkable. It is a pleasant and useful book, and one for which we heartily thank the author.

CHRISTIAN HOME-LIFE, a Book of Examples and Principles (London: Religious Tract Society), is an attractive volume, showing how Home may be made happy, by cheerful piety pervading every member of it. Although a book for parents, yet the chapters on Teaching and Training, the Formation of Character, and Child Piety, contain so many valuable suggestions on the Sunday School Teacher's sphere of duty, that we especially commend them to their notice. The instances cited of many eminent examples of home-piety will afford very useful illustrations for their classes, when enforcing the great principle which "Christian Home-Life" is designed to teach.

TRY, AND TRY AGAIN, by Old Jonathan (London: Macintosh, pp. 280) is an account of the lives of two youths, who, after many vicissitudes, became clergymen of the Church of England. It is a most interesting narrative, bearing evidences of reality and truthfulness, and replete with useful hints and suggestions, both for those who may be stimulated to "Try and Try again," to accomplish a great or good design, and for those who have the direction of the young, in guiding such impulses aright.

COTTAGE READINGS IN GENESIS (London: the Book Society, 8vo. pp. 508) contains a series of short addresses on this interesting portion of the Word of God, in which the Author has especially endeavoured to show how closely the narratives it contains, are interwoven with the revelation of the Saviour who was afterwards to come. They are earnest, pointed, and devout, and are admirably adapted for their purpose.

I BELIEVE, or the Apostles' Creed explained to Children, by Jane A. Winscom (London: Nisbet, pp. 174) is a collection of eighteen addresses or lessons to children upon this concise summary of Christian truth. The authoress has very skilfully treated the subject, and while she has taken care to explain the whole, so that even children may be able to give a reason for their faith, she has also sought to win their hearts for God, by setting forth His love, as the Father, accomplishing in His Son our Salvation, and by His Spirit purifying our corrupt nature, and so fitting us for the communion of saints on earth, and after the resurrection of the body for the life everlasting.

Notices to Correspondents.

Contributions are thankfully acknowledged from W. H. A.; May; H. T. R.; E. S.; W. S. Delta; G. N. S.; Francis Ann; F. F.; M.; M. A. W.; J. B.; C. S.; and F. N.

Articles intended for insertion in the next Number should, if possible, be forwarded early in the Quarter, and not later than the end of May.

Will any of our friends in Lancashire be kind enough to furnish an account of a School in one of the large Manufacturing Towns for the series of papers on "Our Sunday Schools?"